

Schieffelin inspires graduates to find their guides, be the guide for others

by Emma Barringer '24

On Friday, May 26, students, faculty, and family gathered to celebrate the graduation of the Kingswood Oxford class of 2023 at the 111th Commencement Ceremony. English Department Chair Catherine Schieffelin delivered the commencement address, which focused on the importance of mentorship and growth.

At 10:30 a.m., the program began with the procession of trustees, administrators, and faculty. These individuals wore graduation gowns, a new tradition established this year. Then, as the St. Patrick's Pipe Band started their performance, seniors left Alumni Hall in pairs alphabetically.

After the seniors found their seats, the Upper School chorus and orchestra began their rendition of the school song, "Hail Kingswood Oxford!" Orchestra Director Richard Chiarappa wrote this song, and thus, singing the school song is not only a long-standing commencement tradition, but also celebrates Mr. Chiarappa as he enters retirement.

History teacher Ted Levine delivered the invocation and welcomed all audience members. Soon after, senior Faith Potter took the stage and introduced her advisor, Ms. Schieffelin.

Ms. Schieffelin began her speech by reflecting on one particular and often well-known feeling. "I have to admit, as I stand here before all of you, I feel like a bit of an imposter," she said. She continued describing what exactly this feeling of self-doubt is called, Imposter Syndrome.

Ms. Schieffelin noted how her love for the seniors truly motivated her to speak at graduation. "Class of 2023: You're a kind, thoughtful, talented, and creative group of leaders at this school, and you've made an impression on

those of us you leave behind," she said. "As I look back on the year, I think of the passion you brought to your classes, your teams, your art, your performances, and your clubs, as you've served as role models for younger Wyverns. You've grown so much in your time here as you've discovered yourselves through the best of times and the worst of times."

However, Ms. Schieffelin soon shifted the focus of her address. Instead of discussing the successes and achievements of the seniors, she asked them to think about times when they experienced the infamous Imposter Syndrome.

Her address narrowed into three specific examples when Ms. Schieffelin felt a sense of self-doubt and what those experiences taught her. These specific experiences include growing up as a faculty child at Taft School, teaching at the Berkshire School, and parenting twins.

Ms. Schieffelin discussed her experiences at Taft School, and how growing up living on campus became a contributing factor to why she, herself, went into education. Later, when she attended Taft, she began feeling a sense of divide between boarding students since she was a day student. She started feeling like an imposter among wealthy and trendy classmates.

This sense of feeling like an imposter only grew with the nightly ritual, Ms. Schieffelin dubbed "the scene." During this time, boarders were allowed to spend time outdoors. "At the end of the night, if you were lucky, someone would ask to walk you back to your dorm," she said. "I had no dorm to return to, so I just walked myself home. This campus that had once felt so familiar suddenly became a foreign land."

Despite this, Ms. Schieffelin continued to discuss how she found guides and mentors

who gave her critical advice and were able to rid her of her sense of uncertainty. She further charged the seniors to remember the importance of mentors. "As you all head off in different directions (with your many first days and first experiences), don't be afraid to ask for guidance and support as you try new things or doubt yourself," she said. "Look to those you admire and trust when you're uncertain; relationships like this are often all we need to remind us who we really are."

Ms. Schieffelin next discussed her experience teaching at Berkshire School out of college. There, she was excited about working directly with students but still felt like an imposter. It was in her second year of teaching when she met a transfer student named Jess. This student was disruptive and hated authority; however, Ms. Schieffelin saw something in Jess and offered to take her on as an advisee after she was ousted by another advisor.

Teaching Jess and getting to know her personally, Ms. Schieffelin saw all her great qualities. Eventually, Jess started opening up about her struggles with her mental health to Ms. Schieffelin. As an unqualified therapist, Ms. Schieffelin knew she needed to talk with Jess' parents. "In supporting her, I learned so much about myself—both my limitations and my strengths—as this experience of profound self-doubt taught me the value of using my experience and empathy to guide others," she said.

Ms. Schieffelin shared her final anecdote about feeling like an imposter as a parent of twins, noting how she was unprepared when her twins were born early and spent time in the NICU and also felt like an imposter when she had to care for two babies when they returned home. She encouraged students to lean into moments

of uncertainty and doubt. "Of the many lessons that my children have taught me, perhaps the most important one is that anxious feel-

ing, doubts, or worries aren't always bad," she said. "In fact, they're often a sign that we're on the edge of growth. New, disorienting experiences sometimes give us the opportunity to fail, fail better, and ultimately grow. A little bit of discomfort and doubt can push us out of our routine and complacency; it can be transformative."



Ms. Schieffelin smiles in her gown before graduation. Photo by Matt Belo '26.

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She concluded her speech by encouraging students to find their guides and then become guides for others, becoming part of what J.D. Salinger refers to in "The Catcher in the Rye" as a "beautiful reciprocal arrangement."

Following Ms. Schieffelin's inspiring speech, diplomas were presented by Head of School Tom Dillow and Head of the Upper School Dan Gleason. After receiving their diplomas, the seniors shook hands with Mr. Dillow, Dr. Gleason, and the board of trustees. After the delivery of

diplomas, Mr. Dillow then gave his charge to the senior class. Following Mr. Dillow's address, history teacher Rob



Mr. Dillow gives his charge to the senior class.

Kyff gave the farewell address. After these impactful words, the seniors proceeded in their pairs to the theme from Pomp and Circumstance, March No. 1. to the front of Alumni Hall.

Seniors were not graduates yet, however. A beloved tradition at KO is to have seniors shake hands with every faculty member before they can call themselves alumni. Thus, seniors shook hands with faculty members to close the Commencement Ceremony.

The class of 2023 has certainly made an impact on the school community academically, athletically, and through their various extracurricular activities. They overcame various obstacles, including missing the end of their freshman year due to COVID-19. Overall, the seniors' dedication to excellence, in whatever form that may have been, will undoubtedly be missed.

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Grandparents return for first time in years

by Sruthan Tokala '25

On Friday, April 28, the Upper School hosted Grandparents Day for the first time in several years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only were grandparents welcomed to campus, but students were able to invite a grand-friend as well.

Grandparents arrived on campus at 8:30 a.m. and were free to relax in the lobby area of Roberts Theater until assembly began at 9:00 a.m.

As grandparents and students gathered in Roberts Theater, Head of School Tom Dillow warmly welcomed the grandparents. Next, Head of the Upper School Daniel Gleason gave a welcome and introduced the emcees of the assembly, seniors Faith Potter and Manu Narasimhan. Faith and Manu introduced Crimson 7, KO's selective all-boys a capella group, who then performed a mash up of the songs "Bright Lights, Bigger City" and "Magic."

Next, junior Lucy Ybarra gave a speech she crafted in the Advanced Public Speaking elective, recounting the lessons she has taken away from having parents in the military.

Lucy's speech was followed by a presentation that featured this year's senior thesis titles created by English Department Chair Catherine Schiefelin. This tradition has become an annual

one, and awards for senior theses were presented to seven students in an Upper School assembly on Tuesday, May 16.

Next, Oxfordians, KO's selective all-girls a capella group, took the stage to perform the song "Rolling in the Deep."

Following this performance, freshman Samit Virmani gave a speech he wrote in Advanced Public Speaking that took on the form of a poem and centered around the theme of equality. To wrap up the assembly, Outlook, another selective vocal group open to all students on campus, took the stage and performed the song "Take Me There."

Grandparents were dismissed first, and everybody made their way to class for 10:00 a.m.

For many, the assembly was an excellent overall display of KO. "The assembly was a nice opportunity to see a variety of different groups and hear from a variety of different students with some of the speeches that we had," Dean of Students Kata Baker said.

Dr. Gleason agreed, emphasizing the intended duality of the event. "We wanted to make sure that grandparents and all the students have a fun assembly that gave a range of student voices and showed what's really special about KO," he said.

After the assembly, grandparents attended classes with their students and were



Samit Virmani and his grandparents in Spanish. Photo by Marketing & Communications.

able to experience the atmosphere of the KO classroom. Grandparents went to classes with their students during E and G periods, sometimes even taking part in the lesson.

Teachers enjoyed having grandparents attend their classes. "In my class we did the stickleback lab on Grandparents Day," science teacher Graham Hegeman said. "It was really fun to see the grandparents interact with their students, and also get into it and play with the dead fish, seeing what we do in my classroom."

Science Department Chair Fritz Goodman noted how much the grandparents appreciated what was happening in the classroom, and the effect the overall experience had. Sophomore Jenna Kanaan added to this.

"I liked re-introducing them to the classroom," she said. "As you know, they haven't been in class for a while and just seeing how the class dynamic has changed and getting a little insight of what our days look like was nice."

Afterward, the grandparents went to the Dining Hall and ended the day eating lunch with their students, before they left campus around 1:00 p.m.

Traditionally, Grandparents Day has been an event only held at the Middle School. It had been several years since the Upper School had hosted Grandparents Day. Mrs. Baker shared how it

became a part of the Upper School as well.

"The idea was that there was no reason not to do it with the Upper School," she said. The idea of hosting the event in the Upper School was organized by Associate Director of Alumni and Parent Relations Frances Morris '90.

Regarding the future of Grandparents Day, things are looking bright. "Since we now have the schedule of how it could work, my sense is that we'll keep doing it," Mrs. Baker said. Dr. Gleason agreed with this, noting that the school will continue to use a format similar to this one.

Based on his experiences that day, Mr. Hegeman hopes to see Grandparents Day again. "It's a good way to invite the community," he said. "It is worth it."

Overall, Grandparents Day was a success at the Upper School. "They just got a tiny glimpse, because they had that assembly and then two classes and lunch," Mrs. Baker said, "but despite the fact that it was quite brief, there was a lot that the grandparents gleaned from that day."

It was a great moment of bonding between families at KO. "We got to see family connecting, talking about school, and building those connections that we really pride ourselves on," Dr. Gleason said. KO looks forward to hosting grandparents again next year!



Camryn Weinstein with her grandmother in art. Photo by Marketing & Communications.

Junior Nick Tippner wins 2023 speaker, sophomore Stella Zimmer voted secretary

by Ishaan Bafna '26

Each year, elections are held to determine the next members of the Student Government's Executive Committee. The three positions that students can run for are Speaker, Secretary, and Treasurer. This year, junior Nick Tippner won the role of speaker while sophomore Stella Zimmer was voted secretary. Any candidate who chooses to run for a position on the executive committee is required to have been on SGA for at least a year. Their obligations additionally include attending four meetings in that year or eight over two years. The candidates for Speaker must be rising seniors, while those who fill the other positions may be rising sophomores, juniors, or seniors.

All three positions come with lots of responsibilities. "I think the Speaker needs to be someone who has the time and energy to do a lot and run the meetings and assemblies," Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Advisor to SGA Carolyn McKee said. "You want somebody who will be comfortable

speaking in front of the Upper School."

The secretary's main responsibility is to take notes and document what happens in the SGA meetings. "The secretary tends to take notes for the meetings and usually posts them in the Google Classroom," Ms. McKee said. "They also sometimes post them publicly." This year, SGA's minutes have been accessible through a link on the Daily Bulletin.

The main role of the treasurer is to manage the accounting for SGA's budget. The treasurer keeps track of what money is being spent where, as well as the amount of money earned by SGA through school-wide fundraising events. This year was special, as no student ran for treasurer. Sometimes in the past, another SGA member is chosen in meetings to serve as the treasurer, or a special election is held to determine who will occupy the position. This year, junior Leo Zhang will serve as treasurer.

This year, there were two candidates for Speaker, Nicolas Tippner and Leo. Nick eventually won the position for



Nick Tippner, the new Speaker, smiles for the camera. Photo by Bennett Smith '25.

speaker. "I ran for Speaker because I really thought I'd be able to help the school," Nick said. "I also want to make sure everyone is fairly and equally represented

and give the students equal opportunities."

Nick has many ideas he would like to try and implement during his tenure as Speaker. "I want to move the meetings to a time where there is more community input," Nick commented. Nick also looked at last year's Speaker, David Shi '22, and current Speaker senior Frank Pu for inspiration. "I want to bring Frank's enthusiasm and creativity to events," Nick said. "David was also really organized and had really good foresight."

The candidate running for secretary this year was Stella. Stella has been a senator for Form 4 this year. She won the position by receiving a majority of the votes for the position. "I ran for secretary because I like taking notes, and I was secretary in middle school," she said. Stella wishes to get people in the community more connected and involved, and to allow for more school spirit throughout the year.

We wish all the elected members good luck and look forward to seeing what they do in office!

The editorials below represent the collective opinion of the members of the KO News Editorial Board:

Ashley Buckingham, Emma Barringer, Ava Cashman, Raine Wang, Jacob Mapp, Maia Killory, Sasha Dausey, Max Huang, Francesca Lamattina, Keysy Lopez-Diaz, Chelsea O'Donnell

Embrace electives

When you ask students about their favorite class at KO, they will often tell you about an elective they are taking. Electives are an integral component of the KO education, and they offer students an opportunity to explore areas of interest that often wouldn't be covered in a typical class.

However, as rising Form 5 and Form 6 students plan their schedules each spring, course decisions become increasingly difficult. The floodgates of course options—both for AP classes and electives—vastly open up during one's junior year. With the mounting pressure from parents and peers to take as many APs as possible and "catch them all," coupled with the stressors of college planning, elective classes often fall by the wayside.

While core subjects and course rigor are essential, we believe there is a powerful value in electives, as they allow students to delve into academic passions and uncover new interests. To foster this learning, we encourage KO to emphasize the value of electives and to make these courses more accessible to students in all forms.

Each year, KO teachers are able to propose their ideas for new electives. Depending on student interest in electives offered the previous year, each department determines how many open spots there are for new electives. Once an elective is approved, teachers take the lead by developing their own, unique curriculum.

A new elective added this year by the history department was We the People. This class delves into politics and government through the lens of the U.S. Constitution. Students are able to apply what they have learned through frequent mock congressional hearings which are attended by current judges and lawyers in Connecticut, as well as various KO teachers. Additionally, We the People is part of a national program that has developed an engaging curriculum to teach elementary and secondary students about the history and fundamental concepts behind the United States constitutional democratic republic. KO students followed this national curriculum, which has garnered support from state bar associations and other foundations, thus enabling KO students to connect with a much greater community. Like

many other electives at KO, We the People empowers students to relate their learning to the real world and explore niche topics.

Electives can also be beneficial when considering a potential major, or even career. For example, for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year, the math department is adding an Intro to Finance elective, exposing students to budgeting, loans, taxes, and potential careers in the business and finance fields. Additionally, business leaders from the Greater Hartford community will be brought in to speak with students about their experiences. This class will provide students who are interested in business and finance to learn about future careers while building valuable financial skills.

One of the hallmark features of the KO English curriculum is the established Senior English program, in which, in lieu of a traditional year-long English class, Form 6 students take two English electives during the year and write a thesis. In the spring of junior year, students are able to rank the senior English electives that they are interested in. Students often look forward to this because of the opportunity to take agency over their learning and explore their passions. Some of the elective options include The American Dream, The Art of Watching Film, New York Literature, The Happiness Class, and Family Drama. Clearly, the electives span a wide range of topics, allowing each student to pursue a topic they want to learn more about, especially one that often wouldn't be covered in a typical classroom setting.

Electives like these are a key force in the KO curriculum, which aims to prepare students for life beyond the classroom. To continue supporting students' intellectual curiosity, we encourage KO to incorporate more elective options into the curriculum that are open to underclassmen. By growing these elective opportunities, students in Forms 3 and 4 can explore their academic passions without the added stressors of junior and senior year coursework. Additionally, if students have more chances to take electives in their first two years of high school, they will enter the demanding Form 5 and 6 years with more direction and understanding of their academic passions, which will serve them well in the college process and beyond.



As the school year winds down, this marks the last KO News issue of the 2022-2023 school year. Luckily for me, this means that I've survived the infamous junior year, excluding final exams that will take place in just a few days. As I look ahead to being a senior in August, I'm left wondering why does everyone dread junior year?

First, the workload of junior year often feels especially overwhelming, particularly at the start. One of the greatest contributors behind this is the availability of multiple AP and honors-level course options within each subject. Many students feel pressure to take on a more rigorous course load knowing that they will be applying to college soon, bringing added amounts of work.

This brings me to my next point: Junior year is when students are truly introduced to the college process and expected to research colleges, write a first draft of the college essay, and much more. This can feel very overwhelming considering college acceptance rates across the country continue to decline as applications skyrocket.

Lastly, many students assume greater leadership roles during their junior year, becoming captains of sports teams and leaders of clubs. Taking on significant responsibility in these roles requires organization, planning, and commitment, all factors that can add up to considerable amounts of time spent towards these positions.

Overall, juniors are faced with lots of responsibilities and it's understandable why many deem junior year the hardest one of high school. Yet, unfortunately, the truth is the work and stress won't stop at junior year. In reality, each year of school students are expected to take on more challenges and, while, for juniors especially, it may feel that there aren't enough hours in the day to get everything done, this isn't new. Each year of your life has been met with more work, more responsibilities—a reflection of your increased maturity and capabilities. Likewise, the start of senior year will entail, for many, an even more rigorous course load along with the pressure of college application deadlines. While many seniors may expect an easy road ahead following junior year, they are surprised to find that the fall of their senior year is actually harder. Simply, having lots of work to do isn't something that will go away anytime soon and we all must find ways to reduce

A Wyvern's Tale

by Ashley Buckingham '24

stress, accordingly. I have realized that there are many effective ways to manage stress that work differently for everyone, but here are a few that have worked for me.

First, find time for the things that make you happy. No matter what it is, it's important to prioritize doing things you love even when life gets busy. It can be hard taking a break when looking at a never-ending to-do list, but by even taking fifteen minutes to do something you enjoy, you will return more productive.

Second, don't be afraid to advocate for yourself if you need help. One thing I have learned throughout my years at KO is that your teacher is almost always on your side. If you're struggling before an upcoming test or worried about meeting a deadline, go talk to your teacher.

The teachers and adults in your life want the best for you and they're willing to help you navigate any issues you're encountering.

Third, don't stress too much over one thing. This is a lesson that I had to learn this year as I managed balancing multiple assessments and due dates each week. Truly, one test or one essay will not define you and you shouldn't let it. Don't dwell on one thing too much, put your best foot forward, and everything will be okay.

It is important that everyone finds strategies that work for them to cope with stress, but teachers must also be mindful of the amount of work they assign, understanding the many commitments that students have. For the 2023-2024 school year, KO will adopt a new schedule and certain classes will meet back-to-back days, sometimes even three days in a row. Like I mentioned earlier, one of the reasons that KO students can feel lots of stress is dealing with a heavy workload. Many students are involved in clubs, sports, and extracurriculars which are essential to being a more well rounded person. However, with this in mind, it can often feel challenging to balance each of these different parts of our lives. Many KO students don't get home until later in the evening from sports practices and are left with only a few hours to complete homework if they want to go to bed at a reasonable time. The new schedule will come as an adjustment to many students, and teachers must consider this when assigning homework, being mindful of students' time and well-being. Luckily, summer break will begin in just a few days, which I'm sure many of us are looking forward to. This is a great opportunity to relax after a long year and spend time doing things you love. I hope that you all make the most of your summer and enjoy a well-deserved break!

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thread Fashion Show raises \$3254 for The Village for Families & Children

by Alyssa Tousignant '25

On Friday, April 21, KO students, faculty, family, and friends gathered in Roberts Theater to see thread's Fashion Show, "a common thread," Benefitting The Village for Families & Children.

thread is KO's student-run fashion magazine, founded and created by junior Ava Cashman in the spring of 2021.

This year, thread decided to support The Village for Families & Children by arranging a fashion show that raised money for this organization. The Village provides resources and opportunities to families in the Greater Hartford area. Through this event, thread raised a total of \$3,254.09 to donate to The Village.

The event started off at 6:30 p.m. with a social hour and silent auction. This provided attendees with an opportunity to mingle, have something to eat, and bid on items sponsored

it also helped provide the brands with more local exposure, and it gave our attendees the opportunity to bid on prizes that excited them."



Junior Ava Cashman, founder and Editor-in-Chief of thread, thanks the audience. Photo by Ilianna Brett '24

The success was evident, with the silent auction alone raising nearly \$1,000. Following the conclusion of the social hour, the highly anticipated fashion show began.

Ava opened the show by sharing the significance of the event's name - "a common thread" - and explaining The Village for Families & Children's mission. The name was especially fitting for thread's fashion show. The club's mission is to promote individuality and highlight the style and creativity of the KO community through fashion.

The title "a common thread" reflects this goal, as everyone walking the runway was displaying their own style and coming together through fashion. Additionally, all of the models were walking for the common good of supporting The Village for Families & Children.

Following Ava's opening remarks, senior Mac Louis was first to walk the runway. Mac wore a classic, preppy New England outfit with khaki pants, complemented by a navy polo shirt and blue sunglasses. Mac's well-coordinated personal style is inspired by his Papou (his grandfather).

Following Mac's walk, the runway continued to showcase the other models, including

sophomore Joella Asapokhai and sophomore Kayla Buttaro. Joella's personal style was a reflection of her personality, evident in the pairing of her flare pants with a vividly colored flowered top and a flash pink coat. Her outfit was colorful and cute, mirroring her lively and outgoing nature.

Kayla's outfit was also a colorful one, as she wore a pink flowered dress. Picking out which outfit to wear for the show was a highlight for Kayla. "It was fun to see my outfit along with everyone else's on the runway, as it really shows how everyone expresses themselves differently," Kayla said. "It shows our diversity in our style."

Joella also enjoyed seeing the other people walking the runway; however, her favorite part was the sense of community the show brought. "A lot of different people decided to walk in the show, and we all did our part in showing up to rehearsal and encouraging people to be confident on the runway," Joella said. "We all had fun while doing something for a good cause."

In addition to Mac, Joella, and Kayla, many other looks were represented in the show. From timeless elegance embodied

by freshman Alexandra Lenar-chyk who wore the classy black dress to styles inspired by the 70s, the runway showcased a range of fashion statements.

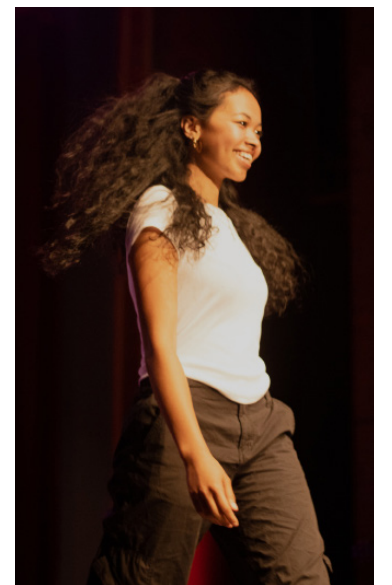
The runway also featured a variety of people, from KO students to history teacher Peter Jones to English teacher David Hild and his beloved golden retriever Cali to English teacher Bill Martino's children, Lizzie, Will, Mac, and Frankie. KO students, faculty, faculty children, and faculty dogs walked the runway to an upbeat soundtrack of songs such as "Style" by Taylor Swift, "Vogue" by Madonna, and "Sunny" by Boney M.

The event flawlessly showcased the unique fashion choices and emphasized everyone's individual style in the community.

Simultaneously, the show created an exciting community event while raising money and awareness for The Village. With great success, the show accomplished these objectives by effectively bringing the community together.

thread's faculty advisor and English Department Chair Cathy Schieffelin was particularly impressed with the show. "Ava did a really amazing job with

organizing this fashion show," Ms. Schieffelin said. "A fashion show can be tough because it can get kind of repetitive. It's hard making it long enough that it's still a fun event, but also not making it so long that it gets boring. She really



Junior Jillian Alexander walks the thread runway. Photo by Matt Belo '26

nailed the balance between these two sides and created something that was great for the community."

Those in the audience were equally impressed. "The show actually exceeded my expectations," sophomore Francesca Lamattina said. "With the lights, sound, and the runway, everything came together really well and looked very professional. My favorite was seeing all my friends show off their unique styles on stage. It took a lot of courage to do that, and I think everyone who participated did a great job."

While "a common thread" was organized by Ava, she was helped by Ms. Schieffelin, SGA advisor Carolyn McKee, Director of Technical Theater Michael Bane, senior thread Events and Outreach Director Alyssa Temkin, and many others, and the event proved to be a remarkable success.

It not only showcased the unique fashion choices and individual styles within the KO community, but also served as a platform for fostering connections and raising money for The Village for Families & Children. It was truly an impressive and wonderful event.



Lizzie Martino and her brothers Will, Frankie, and Mac happily conga line down the thread Fashion Show runway on Friday, April 21. Photo by Ilianna Brett '24.

"My favorite was seeing all my friends show off their unique styles on stage."

—Francesca Lamattina

by several West Hartford businesses. These included Daswani Clothiers, Kimberly Boutique, Restaurant Bricco, Playa Bowls West Hartford, Gypset Salon, Doro Restaurant Group, Success Prep Partners, Black Bamboo, Melanie da Costa, and Second Chance Shop West Hartford.

These partnerships added to and showcased the strong relationship between local businesses and the KO community.

"All of the brands I reached out to were beloved by the KO community," Ava said. "It not only provided more opportunities for us to raise funds for The Village, but

the works for quite some time.

"It has been talked about for a while," Carolyn McKee, the director of academic planning, said, "and we knew something had to be done about it."

Last summer, Ms. McKee along with Director of College Counseling Jami Silver conducted research to see what other schools were doing about this issue.

Additionally, this change comes after many colleges have started to reword the language of their awards criteria.

Working with Interim Dean of Students Kata Baker and Head of the Upper School Dan Gleason, a proposal was created, suggesting that awards should be given to students rather than male or female students.

In February, the proposal was presented to the full faculty and after an overwhelmingly majority vote, the decision was made to de-gender the awards.

The following awards have been affected by this change: The Primus Medal, The Gold Seal,

The Jonathan Downs Prize, The Katherine Long Day Award, The Robert A. Lazear Award, The William R. McDonald Prize.

Most of the obtainable awards are tied to the time when the two schools, Kingswood and Oxford, were separate, meaning that they were dedicated to either a girl or a boy.

As a whole school, KO strives to be more inclusive, and giving awards based on what they honor rather than the gender of the recipient, helps achieve that goal.

The prize assembly is a tradition that is meant to make people feel like they belong in the community and this change is incredibly important to avoid making any student feel excluded. "This allows the school to focus more on the spirit of the award and not the details of it," Ms. McKee said.

With this decision, KO hopes to foster inclusivity within the community and remain a focus on recognizing the most deserving students.

KO makes annual awards genderless

by Ella Wilson '25

KO has made the decision to officially de-gender the awards given out at the annual prize assembly in an effort to promote a greater sense of belonging within the community. Typically, the prize assembly is held the week prior to exams and awards recognize students for their high achievements within the community.

The dilemma of what to do about the prize assembly awards has been in

Power of Women Spring Forum inspires female students, women

by Sasha Dausey '25

On Sunday, April 30, KO's Power of Women group hosted four female speakers for the fifth annual Spring Forum. Senior POW executive committee chairs Alyssa Temkin, Maggie Dwyer, and Tess Chapman led the engaging discussion with the help of Director of Leadership Giving and KO Power of Women Advisor Jayne Rotter.

The panelists were Angela Georgopoulos '00, Christine Bromberg P'23, Debra Fountain P'23, and Joyce Mandell P '82, '85, '87, GP '21, '22, '22, '23, '25, '26. They each shared their experiences in the variety of careers they represented on the panel.

Ms. Georgopoulos currently serves as the Senior Director of Resource Development with the American Society of Hematology. Since her time as KO, she attended Columbia University and got Bachelor's degrees in both Biochemistry and Spanish. Ms. Georgopoulos went on to the University of Michigan and achieved a Master's degree in Public Health.

Over the years, she has stayed true to her passion in the medical field, working in many positions and with many organizations as a research consultant. She moved up the ranks and had unique experiences and opportunities, and has since become a successful business director living in Washington, D.C.

Ms. Bromberg is a successful lawyer and a partner at Robinson and Cole, based in Hartford. She has worked with a variety of clients over her years and has taken on leadership roles in cases including private equity and international law. Ms. Bromberg also teaches classes on corporate taxation at UConn's Law School.

While Ms. Bromberg found her passion for law later than most, she was able to develop her interest into a position where she can make impacts every day. Furthermore, Ms. Bromberg made her own time to begin a family, and now has two children in high school. She learned how to balance her priorities, both personal and professional.

Mrs. Fountain began her career at a corporate job in New Jersey, but soon realized that it was not a good fit for her. She quit her job to become a stay-at-home mom, putting her family and herself first for a change. As time went by, Mrs. Fountain found inspiration in Oprah to find a career she loved that she wanted to share with others.

Starting with fitness classes and personal training in her basement, Mrs. Fountain worked her way up to become an entrepreneur and owner of Lifer Fitness Studio in West Hartford. She has given a lot back to women in the community by helping them gain confidence in themselves.

Mrs. Mandell is an entre-



POW Chairs snap a pic. Photo by KO Marketing & Communications.

preneur and an acclaimed film producer. With her husband, Andy Mandell, she works to develop the Greater Hartford community through her philanthropic work. Mrs. Mandell supports the Boys and Girls Clubs of Hartford, the Greater Hartford Arts Council, the Greater Hartford Jewish Community Center, and many other roles of leadership and community involvement.

Mrs. Mandell has a multifaceted background in business, beginning with her father's entrepreneurial goals when she was younger. She produces documentaries, owns a direct mail corporation, and works with the menagerie of organizations to spread her influence. She determined her own career and schedule, and now spends time with her children and grandchildren,

who all went to, or are currently attending, Kingswood Oxford.

Both younger and older women attended the event, even though the forum is geared more towards inspiring female students to pursue leadership opportunities. "Many adults in the room followed up with me personally and said it didn't matter the age of the person that was in the audience," Mrs. Rotter said. "Everybody had a nugget to take away from these women who've had very challenging and interesting careers."

Sophomore executive committee member Camryn Weinstein took up an interest in POW last year. She wrote for the newsletter and began to get more involved, this year working to advertise the forum through social media outlets. "I asked a bunch of the members

to repost the posters on their Instagram stories," Camryn said, "just to get the word out there."

This year's forum had a noticeable impact, as messages from each panelist found ways to hit home in the audience. "The goal of the event has always been to create this authentic conversation between our students and the panelists," Mrs. Rotter said.

A commonality between all the panelists' advice was the idea of empowerment and taking on leadership roles. Although their professions and career paths created differences among the panelists, these four women shared their journey to where they are now, and challenges they still face.

"I think the overarching theme that Angela articulated, and that the other three women confirmed," Mrs. Rotter said, "was 'don't be afraid to take up space', and 'why not me?'"

Over the course of the past five years, POW has grown to include the Spring Forum, a monthly newsletter, a student-run community service project, and, most recently, a Big Sister-Little Sister program with Middle School students.

"I hope that people have developed more excitement about Power of Women," Mrs. Rotter said, "and that students will want to be more involved in this next year as we continue to move forward and grow the program."

Seven Year Dinner celebrates 19 seniors

by Tess Chapman '23

On Thursday, May 18, 19 seniors who have attended KO since Upper Prep gathered with family and faculty for the annual Seven Year Dinner. The dinner is organized by Middle School French teacher and Associate Head of the Middle School Kathryn Dunn, who works in concert with the advancement office to plan the night.

The dinner itself was a brainchild of Ms. Dunn. "I was talking with Ms. McKee, and at her previous school, they had a dinner for people who had gone from the beginning of the school the whole way through and it was a big deal and it was really special to everybody," she explained.

Ms. Dunn really liked the idea of a celebration of students and families who had been at KO for the entirety of their secondary school experience, so she mentioned the idea to the Head of School at the time, Lee Levison, who put her in charge of organizing it—and she has been doing it ever since.

Each student is allowed two guests and is encouraged to invite faculty members who have played an especially meaningful role in their development at KO.

Adorned with side-by-side



Seven-year seniors gather and smile for a picture outside of Alumni Hall. Photo by Brenda Semmelrock.

photos of each student in sixth grade and as a senior, each family sat at a table with one or two other families and a few faculty members.

After a dinner catered by Sage Dining Services, the students heard from two speakers—current seven year senior Eve Repp along with alum and former seven-year

senior Gwenyth McDonald '16.

Eve spoke about the high and low moments of her time at KO, and how they have helped her grow as a person.

Seven year senior Lucia Martinez-Castro appreciated the ways in which Eve's speech allowed her to reflect on her

time in middle and high school.

"Eve's speech was amazing," she said. "It allowed me to revisit the ups and downs of the past seven years while letting us remember how fortunate we are to have known each other and get the opportunity to learn at KO."

Gwenyth, on the other hand,

talked about the ways in which KO both shaped her and primed her for her later endeavors, and she offered advice to the seniors.

Seven year senior Jordan DiMauro appreciated this part of the night. "It was nice to hear from a seven year alum," she said. "I thought she had some great advice about seeking out new challenges."

After the two speeches the seniors posed for a photo in front of Alumni Hall before moving to Roberts Theater to watch a slideshow of photos from the past seven years, put together by Ms. Dunn. "It's a really important investment that families and students make in a place and it's fun to reflect on where you have been," she explained.

Jordan enjoyed watching the slideshow. "It was a really special way to celebrate being at KO since middle school and it was a sentimental moment to see how much we've all grown up," she said.

Ms. Dunn emphasized the importance of the night as a whole. "It's one of those primary events of your transition from being a student at this school to being an alumni of this school, the next step of your relationship with this institution," she said.

Best of luck to the seniors as they begin this transition!

Everyday exercise for everyday elation

by Cam Hart '25

One of the most famous fashion designers in the world, Rick Owens, gives some of the best advice ever to anyone wanting to look good: "Working out is modern couture. No outfit is going to make you look or feel as good as having a fit body. Buy less clothing and go to the gym instead."

This quote is amazing, but looking good is just one of the many things going to the gym can do for someone, which is why everyone should go.

Most of the time, working out makes me feel better almost instantly.

Whenever life gets me down and I feel upset about something, I try to take some time and do the things I love.

Most of the time, working out makes me feel better almost instantly.

There is something about working out that allows me to be at peace with myself, whether it be the music I listen to or the simple repetitions of the movements

I make, that improve my day.

Another reason is the ability to fit in with others; everyone at the gym is trying to better themselves in some form or another.

Even if you are on the smaller side like me, or some hulking mass of muscle, we all are working towards the same goal and have respect for others doing the same thing.

People are worried when

they go to the gym that they will be laughed at for not being as strong as other people, but 99% of the time no one cares, and once you get over that, you can start to work on yourself more effectively.

A third reason is the most important, and that is the simple reason that working out improves your overall health.

Working out regularly, around two or three times a week,

Even if you are on the smaller side like me, or some hulking mass of muscle, we all are working towards the same goal and have respect for others doing the same thing.



Photo of weights and different types of exercise equipment at a gym. Picture courtesy of Google.

will do wonders for your entire body.

Even just weights or cardio can improve your general fitness in a way that is literally impossible to achieve just sitting on your phone scrolling on TikTok.

However, honestly, no matter what reason I put down, it's almost impossible to describe the feeling you get when you workout and the only way to truly understand it is to try working out yourself.

The indispensable vacation

by Stephanie Lu '23

As the school year comes to an end and summer vacation begins, students prepare to wind down for the three months of summer before the next school year begins. Some people wonder if summer vacation is necessary. However, it is plain to see that summer vacation is a vital part of life as a student.

One of the main benefits of summer vacation is that it gives students a chance to relax between school years. Instead of enduring the usual stresses of school for the entire year, summer vacation allows for a time when students can focus on themselves. Spending nearly 200 days a year in school, not counting weekends when free time is occupied with homework, can be extremely stressful for many students. A break is important for students to relieve stress since most are dedicated to at least 12 years of education.

Summer is also not an ideal time of year to learn. Especially during the hot months, it can be hard for students to stay focused on class in the heat. This is why students should not have school during the summer. Instead of learning for three additional months, the time can be better spent enjoying what, in many regions, is a period of good weather, even if the time is spent inside. Many activities such as swimming in pools and going on beach trips can be done over the summer that can't be done in any other season. Summer vacation allows students to experience these worry-free before they have to return to school or, for older students, are thrust into adulthood.

During summer vacation, some students are sent to summer camps. For example, KO has its own Camp KO summer program for kids in third to 11th grade.

At Camp KO, students can delve into a topic of their choosing from the various courses offered with a group of other students from different areas and ages. At camp, students can form connections with others and develop important social skills, on top of learning more about their interests. Because summer vacation opens up the availability for students to go to summer camp, it is highly beneficial for students of any age.

Of course, not all students are sent to summer camp. Many spend much of their time at home, which is also positive. By spending more time at home, students can spend more time with their families. As students reach high school, they end up spending more conscious hours at school than at home. With the existence of summer vacation, students can reconnect with family and friends instead of dedicating most of their time to schoolwork.

Lastly, summer vacation also provides students with the opportunity to travel. While many choose to stay in the country, some travel internationally during summer vacation. Whether for just a few days or an entire month, students gain invaluable experiences through travel. Even unintentionally, students can learn more about other cultures simply by traveling. Learning about and experiencing other cultures can benefit all people, allowing them to become better at considering different perspectives.

Overall, summer vacation is an important time in a student's life. It allows students to experience many different things, such as traveling, social interaction outside of the classroom, relaxation, or simply more time at home. Without summer vacation, students would no doubt be more stressed and may even miss out on pursuing what truly interests them. Summer vacation is essential to a student's life.

The bitterness of break

by Maia Killory '24

In only a few weeks, we will be released from the stress and strain of school as summer break comes hurling towards us.

Many of us look forward to the longest break of the year as it allows for months of free time to hang out with friends, start projects that school prevented us from doing, or simply relax. However, these breaks may do more harm than good, as the lack of continuity in learning leads to educational issues.

There is a common belief that the origins of summer break have to do with farming, as America's agricultural industry grew vastly after the American Revolution, meaning children would take the summers off to help with their family's farm. However, this is untrue as students who lived in urban areas also had summer off. The article "Why Do We Have Summer Vacation?" from Ginger, states, "Looking back at the history of the American summer breaks, we found that in the year 1842, school kids in the

city of Detroit had an academic year that ran for 260 days."

The true reason why there is a summer break is due to parents, particularly of wealthier families, refusing to stay in the city during the heated summers and, instead, wishing to travel to their cooler country homes.

After much protest, schools eventually complied with parents' demands and allowed for no school during the summer months. However, in a modern era where air conditioners exist and should/could be implemented in all schools around the nation, the issue of students overheating seems insignificant.

While students take months off from learning, they slowly forget the information and study habits they had gained during the previous school year.

As Harris Cooper stated in the article "Summer Learning Loss: The Problem and Some Solutions," from the website LDOnline, "The long summer vacation breaks the rhythm of instruction, leads to forgetting, and requires a significant amount of

review of material when students return to school in the fall." A study conducted by Cooper et al. (1996) found that students' standardized test scores were lower after summer break than before they left, exemplifying the loss of information the extended break had brought upon them. Although some students thrive on standardized testing while others suffer, it was found that all students' skills lowered the same amount.

Many will debate that even though there is a loss of skill with this inconsistent schedule, kids should still have a break as it allows them to have a few months of fun.

However, this is only true for privileged people who can afford to go on vacation, go to camp, or have someone watch them.

These are not the students who are also most affected by learning loss, as stated by Yolanda Sangweni in the article "Is Summer Vacation Bad for Low-Income Children?" In a study conducted by Johns Hopkins University, those who were from a privileged background were able to improve certain skills during the summer while less privileged kids seemed to "unlearn."

For lower-income families, summers are also difficult as parents often have to work but need help to afford a babysitter, daycare, or camp to look after their children.

Of course, this does not mean we should have 40 weeks of school every week of the school year, as that will surely burn students out.

Rather, we should have more week-long breaks throughout the school year, shorter days, and/or four-day weeks. These are not perfect substitutes; however, they allow learning to occur continuously while eliminating the issues of learning loss and the issues that occur in underprivileged communities.



Picture of a sunset at the beach during summer. Photo courtesy of Google.

The out-dated graduation dress code

by Raine Wang '25

When people think of “highschool graduation,” they usually imagine a big podium, with diplomas, flowers, and seniors in black robes.

Kingswood Oxford checks off pretty much every aspect on this list, except for one thing.

Instead of the traditional

or jumpsuits), and boys wear khakis, ties, and blue blazers, and it's all rather archaic, really.

In America, most other highschools wear graduation gowns, which are black robes with some kind of accent color and a tall cap with a flat, square top. It's iconic, and with it comes many other American practices, such as painting the top of your cap, or

and blue blazers worn by KO seniors during graduation have no real significance attached to them. At most, they remind people of weddings, which isn't exactly the idea you would want to project at a highschool graduation.

Part of the importance of graduation is the acknowledgement of the time and effort you've put into high school—that all the long nights studying and memories you've made have culminated into a moment where you can say that you've finally done it, and that you're going to begin a new chapter of your life while saying a sweet goodbye to the old one.

Because it's such a significant turning point in one's life, you want graduation to be memorable, special, and recognizable.

Meanwhile, graduation pictures from KO look almost like the seniors are attending some kind of garden party, or even just a regular dress-up day.

Instead of representing one of the most important hallmarks of one's life, they instead evoke a feeling of casualness to anyone who isn't already familiar with the quirks of KO.

Some may argue that it's important to keep the traditional



KO alumni Teddy Schwartz '22 and Sam Merkatz '22 in blue blazers during graduation. Photo via the KO marketing and communications department.



KO alumni Kylie Wolfradt '22 and Mackenzie Caruso '22 pose in white attire for a picture. Photo via the KO marketing and communications department.

graduation caps and gowns, KO seniors are split down the middle in terms of wardrobe. Girls wear white attire (typically dresses

throwing your cap up in the air after the ceremony is done as a celebration of your high school years.

Meanwhile, the white attire

dress code alive. After all, the practice has been around for a while. However, even Kingswood Oxford hasn't kept with tradition; the original practice required girls to wear long white dresses and for boys to wear tuxedos.

In recent years, students have modified the graduation dress—girls now often opt for shorter dresses and boys replace the tuxedo with a navy or black suit jacket and tan slacks.

The black-and-white dress code is also restrictive for students

who exist outside the gender binary. In attempting to keep with “tradition,” the dress code excludes people who don't identify as a girl or boy and forces them to either conform or find a different way to dress that doesn't make them stand out too much from their peers.

In short, the black-and-white dress code for Kingswood Oxford seniors during graduation is an archaic principle, categorized by its casual, everyday appearance, its restrictiveness, and its general lack of importance.

The significance of social diversity and cultural coexistence in society

by Ethan Stec '25

The coexistence of various cultures from all sectors of the globe is important when one seeks to promote social diversity. When discussing the definition of cultural harmony, the world does not simply subsist on one unified heritage or civilization. How the world consists of differing cultures, each bearing their customs and traditions that are unique to them, which

and languages (with over 800 being spoken). McInerney portrays New York City as a multi-layered living entity with innumerable European, African, and Asian societies that inhabit the city. The allowance for all cultures, disregarding ethnic or theological differences, assists in fostering the intelligence of the nation's people by introducing the assorted variants of cuisine, architecture, and music.

Through examining the

capital city of the Chinese province of Heilongjiang. Since the 1800s, the city consisted of more than 10 villages and 30,000 citizens until maturing into a modern city with great Eastern European influence in 1898. Harbin acted as a Russian administration center over the Trans-Siberian railway, which linked the cities of Dalian and Lüshun.

By 1917, Harbin contained a population of 100,000 citizens, 40,000 of whom were ethnic Russians. Fifty-three nationalities comprise the city, with individuals of Ukrainian, Armenian, Polish, Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian descent. Additionally, many Polish Catholic, Ukrainian Orthodox, and Russian Orthodox churches are established in Harbin, such as the Church of Saint Sophia. Therefore, what cultural coexistence has allowed for in Harbin is the allowance for both Chinese and Eastern European customs to act in harmony with each other, irrespective of racial or cultural differences. Thus Harbin is one such example of a culturally diverse city with various cultures thriving and blossoming with one another peacefully.

Lastly, the multicultural city of Wellington, the capital city of New Zealand, is located near the North Island's southernmost point on the Cook Strait. The nationalities and communities of

Wellington are seemingly blended in a homogeneous manner. For example, Te Reo Maori is one of the city's official languages, and many churches throughout Wellington and New Zealand often integrate Maori traditions in their greetings. Although the city of Wellington mainly consists of New Zealand citizens of European inheritance, by adopting Maori customs, churches can also speak to those in the city who are of Maori lineage, which allows for

which provides a sense of tolerance for all cultures. Consequently, the non-discrimination of cultures and tolerance for people of all cultures invokes cultural coexistence, which promotes social diversity.

In the end, cultural coexistence is vital to encourage the growth of social diversity. Through analyzing cities such as Harbin in China which contains populations of Eastern European and Chinese citizens as well as Eastern European architecture, or cities such as



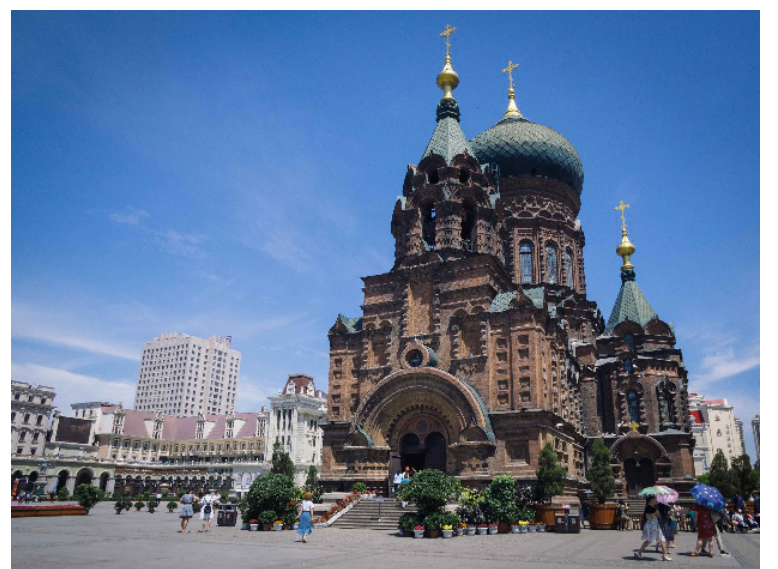
The noon sun shines brightly in Wellington, New Zealand. Image from Google.

collectively function tranquilly and soundlessly, is what stimulates and advocates the ideal social diversity that all societies strive to acquire.

Award-winning books such as American novelist Jay McInerney's 1984 “Bright Lights, Big City” centralizes around the atmosphere of New York City, a city that is regarded as the boiling pot of all cultures as it contains a diverse array of races, ethnicities,

culturally diverse cities of Harbin in the People's Republic of China and the metropolis of Wellington in New Zealand, the harmony of cultural existence is imperative for every society to encourage the growth and development of social diversity.

Harbin is a major Chinese city well-respected for its scientific and political standing in the country and its stance as the

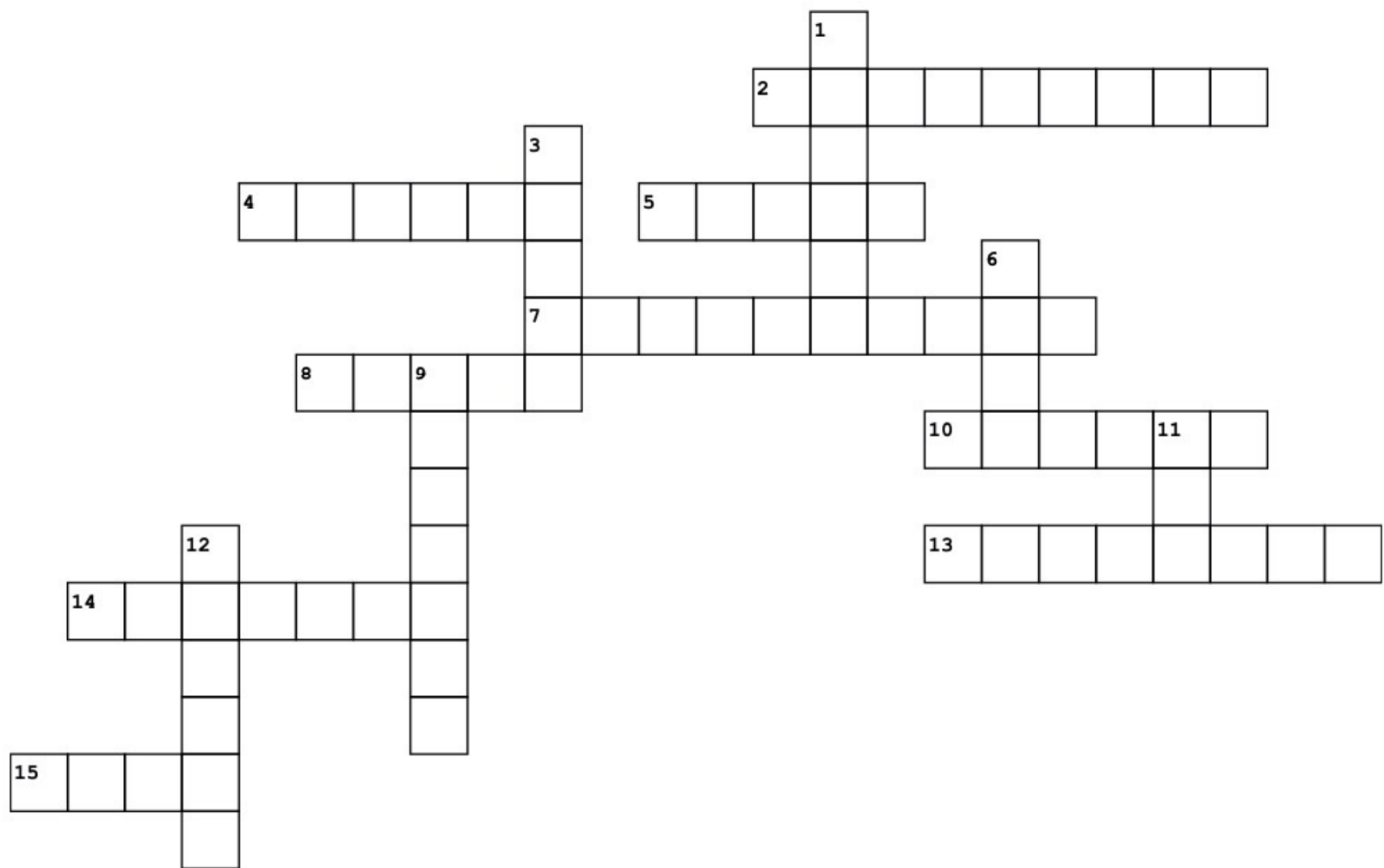


St. Sophia church towers over spectators in Harbin, China. Photo via Google.

inclusion and cultural coexistence.

Moreover, students in New Zealand whose birth locations originate from countries such as Papua New Guinea are welcomed by Lutheran churches in Wellington,

Wellington in New Zealand, which provides tolerance and welcomes the cultures that settled in the country, social diversity is achievable in all societies if the harmony of cultural coexistence is preserved.



Across

2. Name of the class where the author visits campus
4. "____ Green"
5. Dean of Students
7. Winners of Cup day
8. School colors: Red & ____
10. Fall Sports Day
13. Happens every Tuesday
14. You go to ____ when you're late
15. Name of KO's mascot

Down

1. Mythical creature
3. 2022-23 speaker
6. Food service of KO
9. Faculty who is with you for 2 years
11. Name of the Head of School
12. Shield & ____

Jack Harlow drops solid new album

by Sinani Sebadduka a'24

Kentucky MC Jack Harlow has been making and releasing music for over a decade now.

He started gaining steam with his 2017 mixtape "Gazebo," which helped him get signed to Atlantic Records and DJ Drama's Generation Now record label.

Signing took his career to the next level, and with underground hits such as "Sundown," and "Thru the Night (ft. Bryson Tiller)," it wasn't a huge surprise when he took his career to an even higher level with the 2020 hit "What's Poppin."

Sitting at over 700 million streams on Spotify, the seven time (RIAA) Platinum track put Jack on the biggest stage.

His previous success makes the failure of his 2022 album "Come Home the Kids Miss You" come as a surprise.

While the album still brought in streams, the album was one of the worst released by a major artist last year.

With bland, uninspired production and lackluster features

from Lil Wayne, Justin Timberlake, and others, the album was a disservice to the talent Jack had. It felt that every song in that album tried to be a radio hit, leaving little tangible substance to the album. However, one positive thing it did was set the stage for "Jackman," his latest album released on April 28.

Whether Jack felt offended by reviews or if critics motivated him, it's not wrong to say "Jackman." is one of the better rap albums of the current year. The one-minute, 40-second intro song "Common Ground" sees Jack reflecting on life and giving a small sampling of what the album is going to feature.

In the album, Jack steps back from attempting to make every song a forced radio hit and releases more raw, conscious rap. "They Don't Love It" features similar aspects with a vibey soul sample, with the only difference being that it's more energetic.

The best tracks on the album are "Denver" and "Ambitious." "Ambitious" sees Jack continuing the formula from the

first two songs. The thing that separates the tracks is the sample.

Retrieved from the 1979 song "Living My Life Just For You" by the 7th Wonder, the sample has a pleasant vibe. Meanwhile, "Denver" sees Jack reflecting on his massive success over the past couple of years and the negatives that have come with it.

With lyrics such as, "I don't wanna do no press, I've seen enough of me on this lil' screen," and "I've become so vain and insecure 'bout everything, I feel all this pressure to live up to what they tell me I'm gon' be," "Denver" sees a rare level of reflection that is rarely seen in his braggadocious raps and because of this, is one of my favorite songs this year.

Despite being FAR from perfect, it's hard to find many negatives in this album, which in a way is a fault.

One could say Jack isn't the best or most consistent lyricist on the album, but that falls within expectations considering his past. It feels like this album isn't good enough to have no criticisms, but



Cover art for Jack Harlow's new "Jackman." Photo courtesy of Google.

the production is solid, and there aren't any mixing/audio quality issues or other major mistakes. At the end of the day, it's a solid album, and thankfully an improvement from previous releases.

Sinani's Hot Takes

Rating: 4/10

Favorites: "Ambitious," "Denver"

Least Favorite: "No Enhancers"

‘West Side Story’: Reclaiming a problematic play

by Nika Garfield '25

When Steven Spielberg announced he would be directing an adaptation of the 1957 musical “West Side Story,” one of the aspects that he made sure to emphasize was that he was going to cast Latino actors, something which the previous 1961 film adaptation did not do.

While I was originally skeptical about this new version of “West Side Story” released in December of 2021, it ended up exceeding my expectations immensely. Spielberg made sure to be respectful of Latino culture when he was shooting the film, and combined with catchy songs and excellent performances from the actors, the new “West Side Story” is a thrilling and enjoyable experience.

Premiering on Broadway in 1957, “West Side Story” is a modern retelling of the classic Shakespearean romance “Romeo and Juliet.” It follows two rival gangs in the Upper West Side of Manhattan—the Jets, who are white, and the Sharks, who are Puerto Rican immigrants. The two gangs are sworn enemies, both wanting to run the other gang out of the neighborhood they live in.

Amidst this rivalry, one of the Jets, Tony, falls in love with Maria, the sister of the Shark’s leader, Bernardo. As the two pursue a forbidden romance, the growing tensions between the two gangs lead to a tragic ending for both the lovers and the gang conflict.

When “West Side Story” originally premiered on Broadway, playwright Arthur Laurents, along with composer Leonard Bernstein and lyricist Stephen Sondheim, didn’t have any intentions

of portraying the Puerto Rican characters accurately or respectfully. Originally, the musical intended to portray a Catholic and Jewish gang conflict on the Lower East Side. However, when they realized that gang conflicts



The cast of the 2021 movie “West Side Story” dances on set. Image via Google.

weren’t occurring among religious groups, they decided to change it to an ethnic conflict.

While some of the more problematic aspects of “West Side Story” can be attributed to the time period it was written in, it’s clear that the Puerto Rican characters were only written in to add to the conflict of the story. As modern audiences are beginning to speak up about proper representation in media, “West Side Story” in its original form would not be suitable for a film adaptation.

Spielberg’s decision to cast Latino actors as the Sharks also added immensely to the film, as it allowed for the characters to be portrayed true to their ethnicity. In the 1961 film, the only Puerto Rican actress in the cast was Rita Moreno, who played Anita. Every other Puerto Rican char-

acter, besides some of the background characters, were played by white actors in brownface.

“I remember saying to the makeup man one day, ‘My God! Why do we all have to be the same color? Puerto Ricans are

French and Spanish...’” Moreno recalled on an episode of the “Into the Thick” podcast. She tried to explain how diverse Puerto Ricans actually were, which led to an unexpected response. “The makeup man actually said to me, ‘What? Are you a racist?’ I was so flabbergasted that I couldn’t come back with an answer,” Moreno said.

The use of brownface and casting white actors to play Latino characters has been a major criticism of the original film adaptation in recent years, and an aspect that Spielberg sought to remedy with his adaptation. The 2021 film had many notable performances, including newcomer Rachel Zegler as Maria and Ariana DeBose as Anita, who would go on to win the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress.

The 2021 film adaptation takes the foundation that Laurents,

Bernstein, and Sondheim established and builds upon it, expanding on the Puerto Rican characters and their culture in a respectful manner.

In the original musical and 1961 film adaptation, the Puerto Rican characters do not speak Spanish, despite their struggle of integration being one of the focal points of their storyline. With the absence of Spanish and other aspects of Puerto Rican culture, the rivalry between the Jets and the Sharks appeared to be a simple gang conflict, rather than an ethnic one. In the 2021 film, the Puerto Rican characters constantly speak Spanish, all of which is not subtitled. The decision to not add subtitles was intentional on Spielberg’s behalf, as he told entertainment newspaper IGN that subtitled the Spanish would lessen its impact in the film. “I needed to respect the language enough not to subtitle it,” he said.

Along with allowing the Puerto Rican characters to speak their native language, Spielberg also changed some of the more offensive lyrics from the musical. A prime example of this is in the song “America,” where the Sharks sing about their experiences as immigrants, as well as the topic of integration.

In the original musical, one of the opening lyrics to the song was: “Puerto Rico / You ugly island / Island of tropic diseases / (...) And the money owing / And the babies crying / And the bullets flying.” These lyrics were incredibly offensive even for the time, so much so that they were changed to “My heart’s devotion — Let it sink back in the ocean. / (...) And the money owing / And the sunlight streaming / And the natives steaming.” The 2021 film

changes this part of the song once again, only this time, Bernardo’s girlfriend Anita sings the lyrics that were once sung by the “pro” Puerto Rican side: “You lovely island / Island of tropical breezes.”

The 2021 film added many new additions that greatly improved upon the original Broadway musical. Despite these changes, however, “West Side Story” still falls flat for me. While I appreciate what it was trying to achieve as a modern retelling of “Romeo and Juliet,” one of the main issues with this musical is that the story is inherently flawed and problematic.

The original play told the story of two houses alike in dignity, but “West Side Story” flips this on its head by making the musical about ethnic tensions. The musical portrays both gangs as being equally as bad in the rivalry, which makes parts of the musical uncomfortable to watch because of the historical background behind ethnic conflicts that still persist today.

This discomfort is amplified in the 2021 film, where it’s revealed that Riff, the leader of the Jets, attacked Bernardo unprovoked on his first day in Manhattan, which sparked the rivalry between the two gangs.

Overall, “West Side Story” is an enjoyable film, and it makes sure to portray Puerto Rican culture with respect. If you have not seen “West Side Story,” I highly recommend that you do.

While it has problematic elements, it has catchy songs and excellent performances that will keep you engaged throughout, and it is definitely a musical that everyone should see or watch at least once in their lives.

‘The Rescuers’: a tribute to unspoken heroes

by Max Huang '25

“The Rescuers”, a documentary directed by Michael W. King in 2011, is a deeply moving and thought-provoking documentary that shines a light on the courageous individuals who risked their lives to save Jewish people during the Holocaust. It was produced by Joyce Mandell P ’82, ’85, ’87, GP ’21, ’22, ’23, ’25, ’26.

With its powerful storytelling, heartfelt interviews, and historical significance, this film offers a compelling tribute to the unsung heroes who demonstrated immense bravery in the face of adversity.

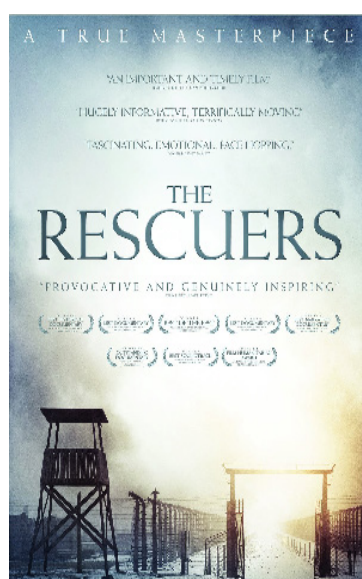
The documentary expertly weaves together personal accounts, archival footage, and interviews with survivors and their rescuers, creating a rich tapestry of narratives that highlight the remarkable acts of compassion and selflessness. The film not only emphasizes the extraordinary actions of these individuals but also explores their motivations, investigating the moral and ethical dilemmas they faced during a time

of great danger and persecution.

One of the strengths of “The Rescuers” lies in its ability to humanize both the rescuers and the rescued. Through the interviews, we gain insight into the emotional toll of their experiences and the lifelong impact these events had on their lives.

Their stories serve as a poignant reminder of the resilience and strength of the human spirit in the face of unimaginable horrors. The documentary is masterfully structured, providing a balance between historical context and personal narratives. It effectively contextualizes the broader historical events of the Holocaust, providing viewers with a comprehensive understanding of the gravity of the situation. By interweaving personal stories, the film creates an emotional connection that brings the events to life and makes them resonate on a deeply personal level.

Visually, “The Rescuers” is a combination of present-day interviews, archival footage, and photographs. The film skillfully utilizes these elements to create



“The Rescuers” poster and reviews from critics. Picture from Google.

a visual narrative that enhances the storytelling. The use of actual footage from the time adds authenticity and poignancy to the film, while the present-day interviews offer a glimpse into the lives of the survivors and their descendants, and their enduring gratitude towards their rescuers.

While “The Rescuers” is a captivating and emotionally

themes of genocide, persecution, and human suffering, which can be emotionally overwhelming. However, it is this raw honesty that makes the documentary all the more important, as it serves as a powerful reminder of the atrocities committed during the Holocaust and the heroism that emerged from it. “The Rescuers” is a compelling and emotionally charged

documentary that sheds light on the inspiring stories of those who risked everything to save Jewish people during the Holocaust.

Through its powerful storytelling, personal interviews, and historical context, the film honors the bravery and compassion of these unsung heroes. While it may be emotionally challenging for some viewers, “The Rescuers” is an



Rwandan anti-genocide activist Stephanie Nyombayire and Holocaust historian Sir Martin Gilbert in “The Rescuers” documentary. Image via Google.

impactful documentary, some viewers may find the subject matter difficult to watch due to its sensitive nature. The film addresses

essential and profoundly moving documentary that serves as a testament to the resilience of the human spirit even in the darkest of times.

‘Crying in H Mart’: grief in its most honest form

by Stephanie Lu '23

If I had to sum up “Crying in H Mart” with one word, I would call it inspiring.

Looking back, I feel like I read the book at just the right time. It was not only relatable but also opened my eyes to new perspectives—namely, the difference between forgiveness and understanding—and also served as reassurance when I found myself in the same situation as the author.

Published in 2021 and written by Michelle Zauner, a Korean-American musician known as the lead singer in the band Japanese Breakfast, “Crying in H Mart” is a deeply personal memoir which chronicles her journey through grief and her struggles as she is thrust into adulthood.

I read “Crying in H Mart” over the summer of 2022, after having seen it in English teacher William Martino’s classroom on the last day of my junior year.

At first, I thought it could be relatable because it was written by an Asian-American author and I, myself, am Asian-American.

However, I soon realized that it was about much more than the Asian-American experience and identity.

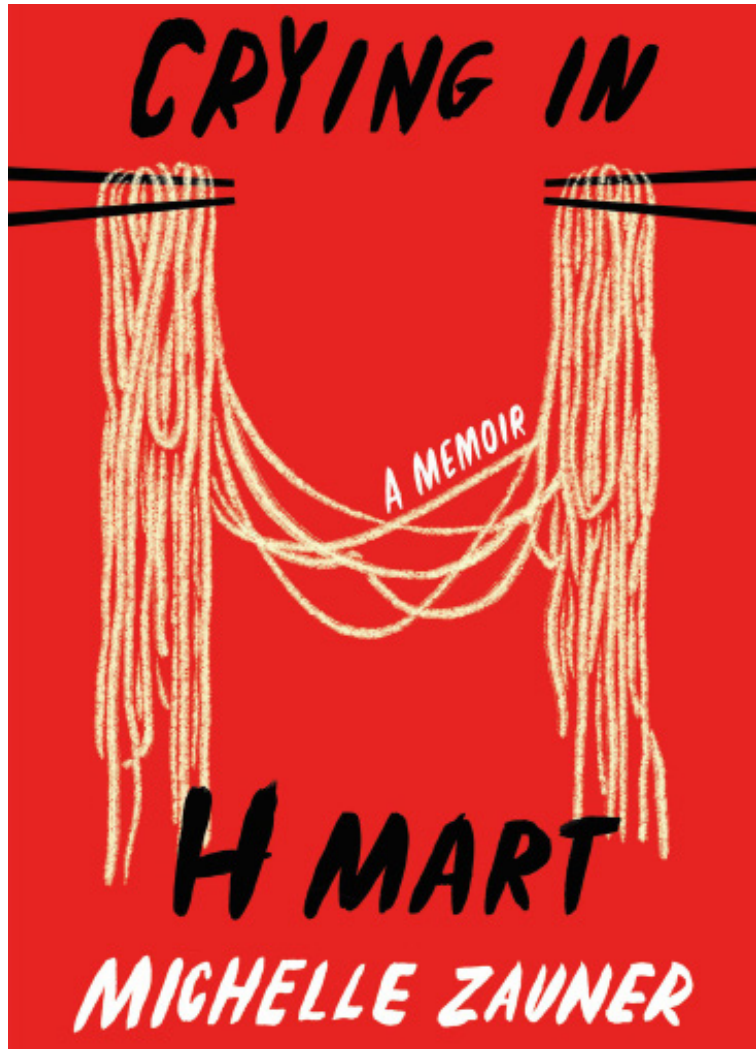
In the memoir, Zauner writes about how her Korean mother struggled through and eventually passed away from cancer, and the effects the death of a loved one had on her.

I found myself relating to many, if not all of her problems.

In “Crying in H Mart,” Zauner describes her relationship with her parents: how her

mother raised her with tough love and how her relationship with her father was strained, especially after she found out his secret, and even more so after her mother’s

memoir. Not only did this lesson become a core part of my college essay, but it also inspired me to try to understand my parents despite their tough love as well.



Front cover of “Crying in H Mart” by Michelle Zauner. Photo courtesy of Google.

death. She eventually came to the understanding that while she may never forgive them for their actions, she can work towards understanding them as people.

This is one of the many lessons I extracted from the

The most relatable attribute of Zauner’s life for me was her mother’s sickness.

In the fall of 2020, my sophomore year, I brought my own father to the emergency room, where he was promptly

diagnosed with stage four cancer.

Reading this memoir nearly two years after the diagnosis, having lived through months of treatments and caretaking, I saw my own experiences in Zauner’s.

Through the administration of medications and milky bags of nutrition, there was familiarity in the physical tasks she described.

But, with an even deeper connection, I found similarities between myself and Zauner in her description of the great emotional toll of being a caretaker to someone who is not only a cancer patient but also the one who raised you.

One of the main struggles I experienced was acknowledging the fact that, ultimately, my father would succumb to cancer, no matter what was tried.

Reading about how Zauner’s mother eventually refused treatment and chose to let the cancer take its course, and about the feelings she had during that period gave me insight into what was to come for me in the early months of 2023.

After my own father passed away, just a few days after I had last visited him in the hospital, I thought back to “Crying in H Mart,” and how Zauner described grief. “It felt wrong to talk to anyone, to smile or laugh or eat again knowing that she was dead,” she writes.

This feeling, while unimaginable during the summer of 2022, suddenly became my reality. After receiving the call, at school no less, I felt numb and lost, avoiding those around me, while refusing to understand why everyone else could act so normally. Just as Zauner had written, everything just felt wrong. It was hard to talk

to anyone, and even harder to tell anyone what had just happened.

After all, I was the only one who felt the shock of the event.

Remembering the feelings that Zauner wrote about, I felt less alone in the type of emotions I felt.

I found that Zauner’s writing was extremely realistic, free from the massive amounts of glossing over that I’d seen in other memoirs.

Grief, one of the rawest and hardest emotions to process, is described not only accurately, but also honestly in Zauner’s memoir.

Ultimately, it was Zauner’s honesty with her emotions and perspectives that has inspired me to be more honest to myself and the people closest to me.

“Crying in H Mart” is an unforgettable memoir that has become a deeply inspirational force in my life.

Never had I imagined that other people’s lives could be so similar to mine.

Reading it before my father’s passing gave me insight into what grief would be like and recalling it after helped me realize that I am not the only one on the planet who has experienced these emotions.

And that, I believe, is the beauty of literature. No matter who reads a piece of literature or when they read it, written work will always have some kind of effect on the reader. Through “Crying in H Mart,” Zauner successfully touched my heart and, most certainly, the hearts of many, many more people.

Whether it be through music or writing, Zauner will undoubtedly continue to inspire and reach others for many years to come.

‘Beef’: a funny and action-packed show

by Max Huang '25

In honor of Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage month, what better way to celebrate the month as Head Reviews Editor than to write an article on a show that features two Asians who want to kill each other? In all seriousness though, the new Netflix show “Beef” has been a huge hit. The show currently holds an 8.2 score on IMDB and a 98% score on Rotten Tomatoes, with critics giving it a high score due to its intriguing plot and its use of comedy combined with action and dramatic cinematography.

“Beef” is a gripping tragedy that begins in a home improvement store called Forster’s. Danny Cho, played by Steven Yeun, is struggling financially but longs to bring his hard-working parents from Korea to the U.S. and provide them with a comfortable retirement. Desperate for money, Danny attempts to return multiple hibachi grills without a receipt, a task known to be nearly impossible and soul-crushing. Simultaneously, Amy Lau (played by Ali Wong), the founder of a high-end plant store called Kōyōhaus, is negotiating a lucrative acquisi-

tion deal with Jordan Forster (played by Maria Bello), the head of Forster’s. Selling her business to Jordan would secure

“Beef” consists of 10 intense and propulsive episodes, where fleeting moments of relief provide respite amidst the tension.

a life of luxury for Amy and her family, granting her the relaxation she has been deprived of due to her relentless dedication.

In the Forster’s parking lot, Danny and Amy’s lives collide during a heated road rage incident. This encounter sparks a persistent and escalating cycle of revenge between the two protagonists. They memorize each other’s license plates and engage in a

war of terror. Danny urinates on Amy’s renovated commode, while Amy retaliates by spray-painting insults on Danny’s beat-up truck. What makes “Beef” so captivating and anxiety-inducing is its

themselves in secrecy. As a result, Amy’s daughter and husband along with Danny’s parents are exposed to potential harm.

The show delves into the moral complexities of hurting



Netflix series “Beef” receives high ratings. Photo courtesy of Google.

exploration of the extent to which people can harm one another. Amy and Danny go beyond physical violence, seeking to hurt each other on a deeper level by targeting their loved ones. As the feud intensifies, there is an underlying fear that innocent family members may become collateral damage in this escalating battle.

Driven by their desire to protect their loved ones, Amy and Danny inadvertently distance themselves from them, isolating

others and the devastating consequences that ripple through the lives of those involved. “Beef” consists of 10 intense and propulsive episodes, where fleeting moments of relief provide respite amidst the tension.

The series highlights the ways in which Amy and Danny become intertwined in each other’s lives, causing further emotional turmoil for both parties.

I especially want to applaud Ali Wong’s portrayal of Amy

Lou. If the main characters were just simply sociopaths, viewers would not connect with them.

However, thanks to the brilliant performance by the two lead actors, Amy Lou and Steven Yeun, the main characters were shown to have humanity, as they both have believable and relatable ambitions.

While films like “Everything Everywhere All at Once” focus on the generational trauma that American-born Asians have to face, “Beef” focuses more on the class struggle that Asian Americans face in society.

The creators of “Beef” recognize and embrace the fact that the Asian-American experience is multifaceted, acknowledging that it is shaped by various factors such as wealth, ethnicity, immigration, and assimilation. This unconventional view of society is another intriguing point that drew me to this TV show.

In conclusion, “Beef” is not just a funny revenge comedy. It represents the struggles that Asian Americans face, showing that not everything is black and white as it sends the message to always care about the people around you.

For these reasons, I strongly recommend this show.

‘Over the Garden Wall’: haunting, hilarious, heartwarming

by Raine Wang '25

Have you ever been lost in a forest for an hour? What about a day? Minutes feel like hours when all you see is trees upon trees upon trees, stretching out for what could be only a few miles, or a few acres.

The rules are different in the woods—cell service is spotty, if there is any at all, and you don't

While still retaining the whimsical, somewhat nonsensical aura about it that most kids shows tend to have, the deeper message of the importance of family and hope, as well as the riveting plot and hints of horror embedded in the story, make “Over the Garden Wall” an amazing show for kids and adults alike.

know what wild animals hide in the foliage. It's terrifying, right?

“Over the Garden Wall” is a children's mini-series that takes that primal fear of getting lost in the woods and turns it up to the max. It was created by Patrick McHale and Katie Krentz, and released on Cartoon Network in November 2014. The series follows half-brothers, Wirt and Greg, who find themselves lost in the woods just beyond their town's cemetery after Halloween. Wirt, the elder of the two, is a nervous person and tends to keep within the rules. He somewhat resents Greg, his free-spirited and eccentric little brother.

As the two attempt to find their way out of the forest, they encounter a cursed blue bird named Beatrice, who promises them a way back home and a woodsman with a lantern he keeps lit with oil from the seemingly endless Edelwood trees. The woodsman warns Wirt and Greg of a beast that stalks to forest, preying on vulnerable children, and gives them directions back to civilization.

As the series progresses and the boys get more and more lost, the story forces us to confront our own self-centeredness and strained relationships with family, while showing us the significance of determination and hope.

In addition to its amazing plot and themes of family and hope, “Over the Garden Wall” has a unique, hauntingly beautiful animation style. The muted and limited color palette, as well as the use of vintage elements such as old frames and technology from the Industrial Revolution, gives a sense of old

mystery and curiosity to the forest.

The simple shapes the animators use for the characters we're supposed to root for (such as Wirt, Greg, and Beatrice) contrast against the twisting, claw-like shapes of trees and the Beast. The design of the Beast, while simple, is incredibly effective. For the majority of the series, all we see him as is an antlered shadow, hidden in the safety of the trees, eyes glowing as he watches Wirt, Greg, and the woodsman.

His luminous eyes are a clue into his true nature, and his connection to the incandescent lantern the woodsman carries around—they say eyes are windows to the soul, and the Beast's character design seems to take that quite literally, as his soul feeds off the fire in the lantern. In order to keep his spirit lit, the Beast convinces whoever holds the title of lanternbearer that a loved one's soul is in the lantern.

Near the end of the show, when the woodsman confronts the Beast after realizing he had been tricked into believing his daughter was in the lantern, we get a brief glimpse of the Beast's true nature as his shadowy cover is disrupted by light. We see that he's made of pink and brown Edelwood trees, the wood that forms his body twisting and turning such that it seems almost as if he's made up of hundreds of screaming faces. The design and the timing of its reveal is horrifically effective, adding to the general eeriness of the series.

In addition to captivating animation, “Over the Garden Wall” is a show all ages can enjoy. For one, it's easy to watch; at just 11



Over the Garden Wall, an animated series for everyone. Photo by IMDB.

minutes per episode, the show in total is only about two hours long, but it makes good use of the short time it has. While still retaining the whimsical, somewhat nonsensical aura about it that most kids shows tend to have, the deeper message of the importance of family and hope, as well as the riveting plot and hints of horror embedded in the story, make “Over the Garden Wall” an amazing show for kids and adults alike. Although some

episodes in the show are definitely aimed towards a younger audience, “Over the Garden Wall” is perfect if you love animation, horror, and a heavy-hitting plotline. Although it's probably best watched in late autumn with a cup of hot chocolate and a few friends, the show is a timeless masterpiece. If you've got a few hours of free time and are craving something nostalgic and beautiful, “Over the Garden Wall” will have you hooked.

Boost Bowls: A healthy addition to West Hartford

by Allie Arcaro '24

On May 17, 2023, Boost Bowls opened its doors in West Hartford center. After receiving success in both Bethel and Newton, they opened their doors at this newest location on Farmington Avenue, bringing a new level of health food to West Hartford with its diverse menu featuring smoothie bowls, protein shakes, boosted smoothies, and a combination of wraps and sandwiches.

With both outdoor and indoor seating, this new eatery provides a quick place to grab food on the go or hang out with friends.

The upbeat music and colorful decorations inside match perfectly with their food: colorful smoothies, fresh fruit, and unique options unlike any restaurant nearby.

They include vegan, gluten-free, and dairy-free options as well. After ordering, it took me less than five minutes to receive my bowl. The vibrant interior invites customers to eat in, but there are options to order ahead and pick up, and even an app for convenience. The decor is clean and energetic, and space is large enough to accommodate a small group of friends.

Their smoothie bowls are definitely the key aspect of their menu. They offer a variety of toppings, ensuring that each bowl is truly unique.

While they offer classic toppings such as fresh fruit, peanut butter, and coconut, they also offer more distinctive options such as pumpkin seeds, bee pollen, and agave. Additionally, customers

can choose from a variety of base options including acai, pitaya, blue majik, avocado, and banana. The variety of toppings allow customers to be creative when ordering, another highlight of this location.

Their smoothies, protein shakes, and juices stand out from the competition due to their bright colors and unique names. The pink dragon boosted smoothie and the

glow juice, which are hot pink and neon orange respectively, are perfect examples of eye catching drinks available at Boost Bowls.

Although I wasn't able to try a smoothie, I was definitely impressed by the variety of options available, and I will hopefully return to try one soon. The food options include a variety of toasts and sandwiches, making it

the perfect spot to grab lunch in between classes. Customers can customize their food options, carrying on the theme of creativity. One stand out is their Pb&B, a new twist on a classic sandwich; this includes peanut butter, banana, and apples. They also offer many wraps and salads on their menu.

When I received my bowl, it was towering over the top of the container. My simple acai bowl was elevated by the unique granola dispersed throughout the bowl and the natural ingredients used. The staff was friendly and provided good customer service.

The bowl only cost around \$12, which is comparable to similar places in the area. Most of their food options range below \$10, making it an affordable option for students in the area. For the quality of their food choices, the price is exceptional.

I would recommend Boost Bowls for anyone looking to find a new restaurant in the center serving a variety of healthy food choices. I will definitely be returning in the future to explore more of their expansive menu.

Overall, Boost Bowls is a great new addition to West Hartford center.



Front doors and windows of the brand new restaurant in the West Hartford Center; Boost Bowls. Photo by Allie Arcaro.

Arts Night '23: A fun celebration of the arts

by Nika Garfield '25

On Friday, May 12, KO held its third annual Arts Night. The event allowed for students to perform in front of their families, with performances taking place at the Senior Green, Alumni Hall, and Roberts Theater.

Along with musical performances, visual art students were also able to display their artwork in the gallery. With a combination of all of these performances, the 2023 Arts Night was a success.

The event began on the Senior Green, with performances by KO's a cappella choirs: Oxfordians and Crimson 7.

The two groups sang a variety of songs, including "Rolling in the Deep" by Adele, "Black Horse and the Cherry Tree" by KT Tunstall, and "Runaround Sue" by Dion DiMucci.

The latter two songs featured seniors Mckenzie Campbell and Luke Roen as soloists.

After the a cappella performances, KO's jazz band performed, conducted by creative arts Department Chair Todd Millen. Following the jazz band

were performances from the theater department, featuring piano accompanist Susan Carol.

Students from KO's theater department performed two songs at this year's Arts Night: "This is Not Over Yet" from the musical "Parade," and a tap dance routine to "I've Got Rhythm" by George and Ira Gershwin.

The musical "Parade" is based on the real-life trial and murder of Leo Frank, a Jewish factory superintendent who was wrongfully convicted of murdering one of his employees in 1913, a conviction widely believed to be motivated by antisemitism. The

This year's Arts Night was a very fun experience for all the students who participated in the event.

musical explores the lives of Leo Frank and his wife, Lucille, as she

tries to convince the public that her husband is innocent of the murder. In "This is Not Over Yet," Leo Frank, played by freshman Leo Kollen, realizes that he still might have a chance to prove his innocence. He is joined in the song by Lucille, played by Mckenzie, who promises to stay by his side until his trial is over.

The second song, "I've Got Rhythm," was noted as being a challenging piece to rehearse in the week leading up to Arts Night.

"For a long time we didn't have rhythm," Director of theater Kyle Reynolds said in his introduction for the song, reminiscing on the hard work from the students when rehearsing the piece.

The performances from KO's select choir Outlook and KO's orchestra came next, which took place in Alumni Hall.

Following the performances in Alumni Hall, the night concluded with a performance by the concert band in Roberts Theater. Outlook also returned to perform two more pieces in Robert's Theater, including "I Gondolieri" and "O What a Beautiful City."

This year's Arts Night was



Sattah Phouthakoun solos, backed by Alice McClure, Avery Schiff, Abbie Schiff, and Stella Zimmer. Photo by KO Communications and Marketing.

a fun experience for the students who participated in the event. It could be hectic at times, however, with how the event was arranged. "I know a lot of us that were in multiple performances were scrambling to change and get to our different things," sophomore Zaire Ramiz said, who performed in Crimson 7, Outlook, and the

theater performances. "Every performance happened, which was good, but it definitely was hectic."

Arts Night, overall, is a fun experience to celebrate the creative arts at KO. With this year's Arts Night being a success, we're excited to see what the creative arts department has in store for the event in the following years.

'Naturescapes': exploring our relationship with nature

by Francesca Lamattina '25

Senior Eli Brandt worked tirelessly over the past few weeks to create his own art show, "Naturescapes," which was shared with the public on Tuesday, May 16, in the art gallery outside of Roberts Theater.

In elementary school, Eli began creating paintings inspired by family vacations. "When I came to KO in sixth grade, I took all of the art classes I could because I always had ideas that I wanted to express creatively," he said. He eventually gravitated towards

printmaking, which was the primary medium of his art show.

As a culmination of his independent study in printmaking, Eli cultivated and presented a series of pieces he created during his high school career. They centered around the unique interactions between humanity and nature, and his personal experiences relating to environmental issues. "That's a theme that I work with a lot in my artwork," he said. "I'm really excited to have people experience that and contemplate that theme. I spent a lot of time writing artist statements about each piece, so

I'm excited to share my ideas about that with the community."

Working individually with creative arts teacher Katherine Nicholson, the two collaborated to create a curriculum and plan his art show. "The main goal was to combine techniques I had experimented with throughout the years to build more nuanced compositions," Eli said.

Although this is a passion of his, printmaking can occasionally be a source of stress, as it can be difficult to fix a mistake when you have one shot to print something. "Sometimes it's stressful or makes me anxious, but in the end it has taught me a lot of perseverance," Eli said. "Working with art has helped me become less of a perfectionist, which has been a really important part of my development, especially as a learner and a person."

"I spent a lot of time writing artist statements about each piece, so I'm excited to share my ideas about that with the community."

—Eli Brandt

After taking AP Art History in his junior year, Eli learned about various artists and their respective mediums. "It was cool to see a bunch of different techniques and take a little bit of inspiration



Eli Brandt '23 smiles in front of his artwork. Photo by Matthew Belo '26.

from each person," he said. "There are so many artists out there and everyone has a unique voice."

He also mentioned that Mrs. Nicholson has been a huge inspiration to him after first introducing him to printmaking in seventh grade.

In addition to sharing his artwork on various social media platforms, Eli also has his own website and an Etsy account on which he sells his work. He mainly sells linoleum prints, but also creates other mixed media pieces.

"[Printmaking] has taught me a lot of perseverance."

—Eli Brandt

Eli will be going on to study visual art and environmental science at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts. We wish him the best of luck in the future!



A creative display of Eli's prints, strung up. Photo by Ava Cashman '24.



Collection of paintings by Elias Brandt inspired by various family vacations around the world over the years. Photograph by Ava Cashman '24.

MOTM: Jack Gold AOTM: Abby Baier

by Miles Gruber '26

The KO News is excited to announce that this issue's Musician of the Month is senior guitarist Jack Gold.

Jack has been playing guitar since he was six years old and has over 12 years of experience playing.

"My mom has videos of me jumping around the kitchen with Queen or Green



Jack performs on stage at Winter concert. Photo courtesy of KO Communications and Marketing.

Day playing," Jack said, "and I'd always play air guitar."

Jack has played the guitar at many places throughout his music career.

"I played at the Yard Goats stadium before," Jack said. He has also played at other school events such as Hewett Day.

When reflecting on how he started playing the guitar, Jack shared that it wasn't one moment, but rather an appreciation for music that he has always had.

"It wasn't really a choice where I woke up and said, 'I'm

going to be a guitar player,'" Jack said. "My parents kind of knew, and I guess I'd always loved music."

One piece of advice Jack has for up-and-coming guitarists is that practice makes perfect.

"For the first five or six years," Jack said, "I would only play when either my teacher was there, or I had to play because my teacher made me practice. But it wasn't until I got into seventh grade where I really started playing on my own every day."

Jack has gone to KO for many years, and it has helped him a lot in his musical career. "Through middle school," Jack said, "I played the clarinet in concert band, and I also played guitar in the jazz band in seventh grade, but I did one show with them in sixth grade. There have been multiple options that way and Mr. Millen has been super supportive of me."

Jack shared that the teacher who has been most encouraging has been performing arts Department Chair Todd Millen.

"He was my advisor freshman and sophomore year," Jack said. "Being in two of his bands, to kind of have that outlet, I'd come from jazz combo and then go straight to advisory group some days."

When talking about his future in musicianship, Jack seemed to have pretty big ideas. "I hope to maybe start a band with some of my own friends," Jack said.

We thank Jack for his many years playing the guitar for us, and we hope to see more from him in the future.

by Francesca Lamattina '25

Senior Abby Baier is no stranger to photography. Serving as the Managing Photography Editor for the KO News for three years, she brought her own personal touch to every newspaper issue through interesting and unique photos. Abby began experimenting with photography when her parents gave her a camera in her sophomore year.

"It was so amazing to go through a stressful day of school and then have photography class at the end of the day," she reflected. "It's a really calming and relaxing way to express my ideas creatively." As a member of the KO News, she was able to find a role that perfectly balanced both creativity and discipline. "It was fun taking photos as an associate, but I wanted to have more of a leadership role," she said. "With art, there is not a lot of discipline; there are no deadlines. But with the deadlines of the KO News, I found the perfect role for me."

Abby also reflected on how KO itself has been essential to her artistic journey, and truly helped her fall in love with photography. "KO was basically the reason my love of photography blossomed," she said. "Mr. Scranton has been really pivotal because he's my photography teacher and advisor, so it's helpful that I can always go to him if I have any questions."

Although she has never particularly been drawn to painting or drawing, Abby mentioned that art in general is a very important

aspect of her life. "It's a really calming force in my life," she said. "In school, you're expected to do well and you're critiqued on your work. But with art, it's just an expression of yourself. You can do whatever you want and it can still be amazing; there are no limits or pressure."

Throughout her time as a photographer, Abby has picked up many valuable pieces of advice for other artists, including the ability to find beauty in the mundane.

"You don't have to take the perfect phot because art isn't perfect—art is messy," she said. "When I was younger, I thought there had to be a perfect moment

to take a photo; it had to be a beautiful sunset or something. But you can take photos of ordinary things and make it beautiful."

In the future, she hopes to continue to pursue art as a hobby. "I definitely want to explore photography in college and maybe take a few classes," she said. "I'm really hoping that I can find something similar to thread or KO News where I can be a part of something bigger in my college community."

Abby has had such an amazing, positive impact on the KO News itself and on everyone she touches in the KO community. We wish her the best of luck in the future!

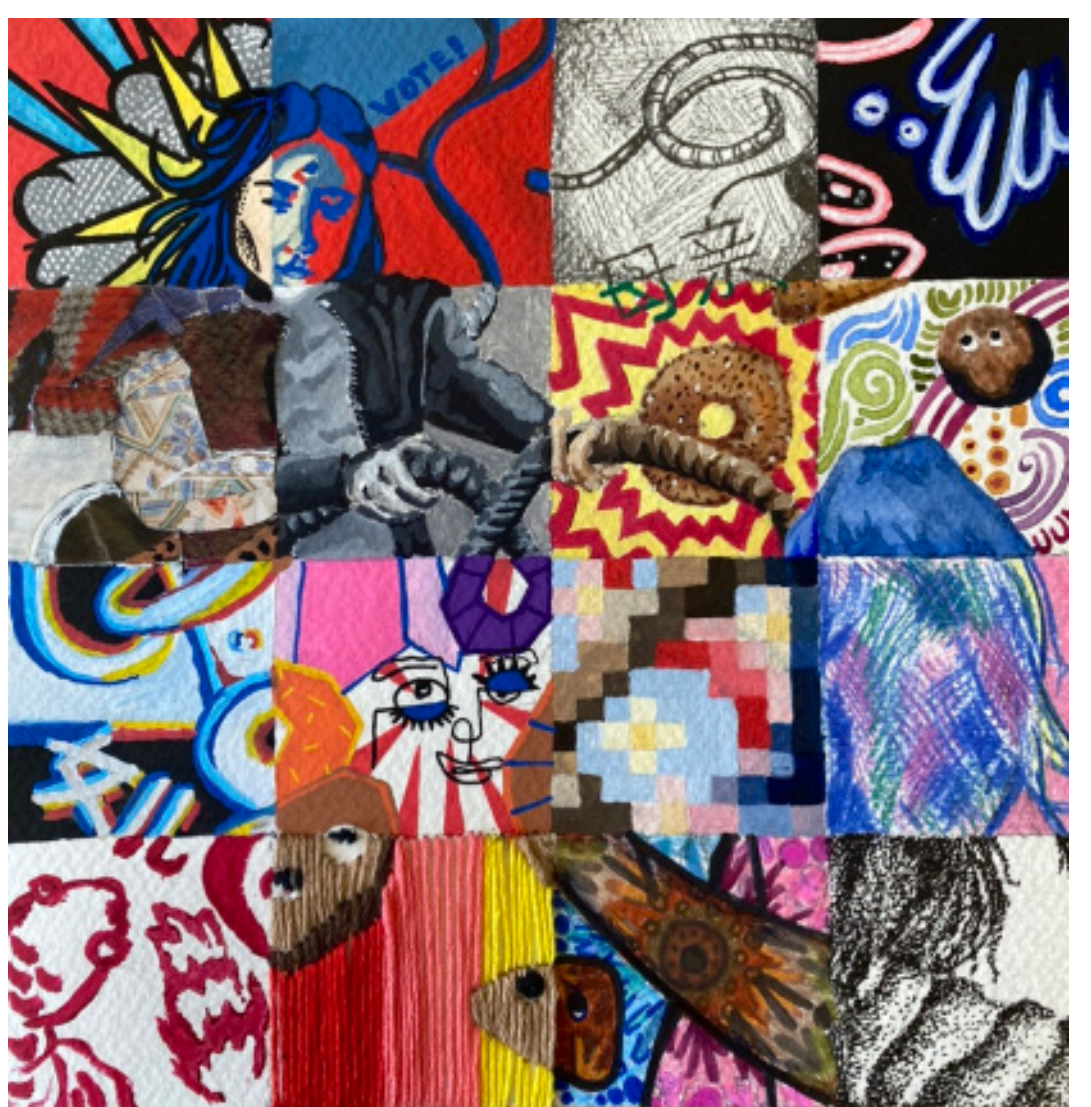


Photo of Macey Kotowitz taken for thread Magazine. Photo by Abby Baier.

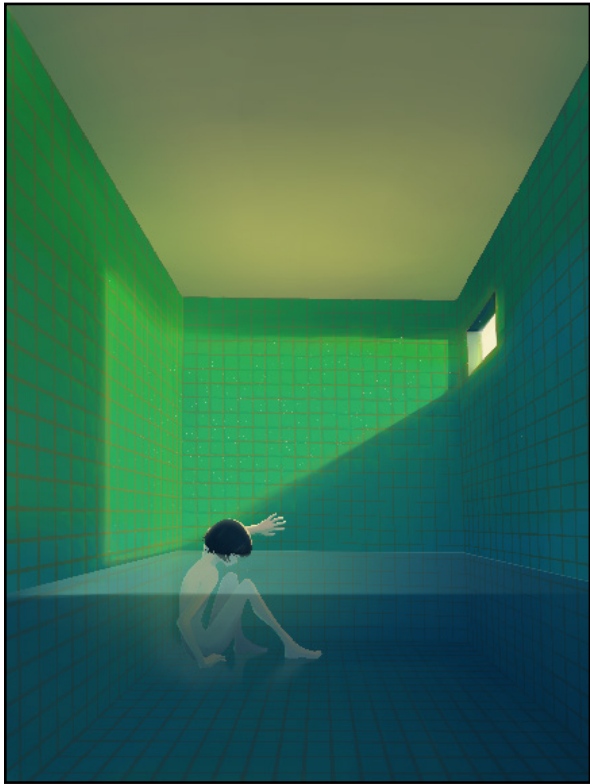
Senior Portfolios: A Creative Collection



Senior Jill Plaut's artistic celebration of John Lennon. Photo by Greg Scranton.



Senior Lucia Martinez-Castro's art inspired by "Everything, Everywhere All At Once." Photo by Greg Scranton.



A Gallery of Senior Art

*Clockwise from top, art by
Christina Mullen, Eli Brandt,
Eve Repp, Sophie Glazier,
Stephanie Lu. Bottom photo
series by Abby Baier.*



Don't worry about the flowers,
they'll be hidden in the vase!

Camp Merriwood, a Hild family tradition

by Ava Cashman '24

Each May, the festivities of Cup Day, Senior Week, and Commencement remind the KO community that summer is on the horizon. After saying our farewells in June, KO students and teachers all embark on unique journeys during these cherished three months, whether it be traveling, building friendships, chasing adventure, playing sports, or reconnecting with nature. English teacher David Hild spends his summers bringing these opportunities to campers from across the country, building memories that last a lifetime at Camp Merriwood.

Located in the sunny mountains of Orford, N.H., Camp Merriwood has always been a family affair for the Hilds. The tradition travels back to the 1930s, when the grandparents of Susan Miller

Hild, Mr. Hild's wife, purchased Camp Moosilauke, a boy's camp located in the New Hampshire mountains. In 1949, Mrs. Hild's grandmother, Janet Miller, founded Camp Merriwood as Moosilauke's sister camp. Now nearing its 75th anniversary, Camp Merriwood has been cared for by generations of Hilds and Millers, pouring their love, time, and energy into the camp for decades.

Mr. Hild and his wife have run Camp Merriwood for the past 20 years. Each May during "shoulder season," Mrs. Hild makes the trek up to Camp Merriwood for the summer, where she spends the following weeks getting the camp up and running before the summer begins.

Once faculty meetings are over, Mr. Hild heads up to Orford as well, spending his sunny months running Camp Merriwood until



Campers making memories at Camp Merriwood in Orford, New Hampshire. Photo courtesy of www.merriwood.com.

campers during activity periods. "The most fun thing is just seeing how much the girls love coming to camp and how much they enjoy it," Mr. Hild reflected. In the evenings, campers partake in fun evening programs that the Hild family and the Camp Merriwood staff organize each night of the summer.

When campers look back on their summers, they often remember the adventures, friendships, and memories made. However, the behind-the-scenes of running a camp is often not as glamorous. Mr. Hild and his staff show true selflessness day in and day out to keep Camp Merriwood in peak condition. For example, while the rest of the campers and staff are resting and eating lunch together, Mr. Hild can often be found out in the summer heat, cutting grass on the field. "It's a time when nobody's on the field, so I spend a decent amount of time cutting grass, weed whacking, and doing things like that," he shared.

In addition to running the day-to-day operations of Camp Merriwood, Mr. Hild enjoys taking the campers on overnight excursions each summer, such as white-water rafting in Maine and visiting Montréal. "Wednesdays tend to be trip days where every group goes to a different spot somewhere in New England; it might be a beach or a waterpark, and they love doing things like that," he described.

In addition to traveling, campers at Camp Merriwood enjoy many traditions back at camp, including mini Olympics, interna-

tional days, and color wars. One of the longest-standing traditions at Camp Merriwood is Peter Pan night, which Mr. Hild described with nostalgia. "The oldest girls have different responsibilities and opportunities during the summer

"The most fun thing is just seeing how much the girls love coming to camp and how much they enjoy it,"

—Mr. Hild

because it's their last year," he shared. "On Peter Pan night, they always pick some film or story that they put on as a play. The girls don't know when it's going to happen, and they do it at night - the younger kids are brought out and they see the play and get hot cocoa and donuts, and they just think it's the coolest thing in the world."

Each summer, Mr. Hild most looks forward to the beloved tradition of Christmas in July. "I am Santa in July now," Mr. Hild said, laughing, "and my wife is

Mrs. Claus, so that's a lot of fun. It's like a secret Santa - every kid gets someone else, and there's no buying of gifts, everyone makes something." Traditions like these make each summer unforgettable, and Mr. Hild looks fondly upon the end of each camp season as everyone shares a bittersweet goodbye. "The end of camp is hard because it's a lot of tears and people that are sad to go," he shared. "It sounds weird, but that's really rewarding, knowing that it's been really meaningful, and knowing how much they've enjoyed it."

Last spring, Mr. Hild worked with history Department Chair David Baker to bring the joy of Camp Merriwood to KO's rising freshmen. The orientation trip that was born was a combination of academics, adventure, and friendship-building for the freshman class. "The original plan was not to go to Merriwood, it was to have Merriwood be a base of operations [for the program]," Mr. Hild said. "More and more, it made more sense to turn it into a freshman orientation trip that has a curricular aspect to it with science and history, and English became storytelling that got worked into it. Most people that went on the trip would say that it worked out really well, and the plan is to definitely have it continue."

As new summers and school years begin, the constant for Mr. Hild will always be Camp Merriwood, and the joy he is able to bring to the next generation makes it all worthwhile.



English teacher David Hild and his wife Susan Miller Hild smile at Camp Merriwood celebrating their 28th anniversary. Photo courtesy of David Hild.

he has to head back to KO for preseason practices. "She's a lot busier than I am because everything is really on her," Mr. Hild noted. "Besides just managing the kids and the staff, she does a lot of communication with parents."

Mr. Hild's day-to-day work at Camp Merriwood often consists of helping out with whatever situations the day brings, whether it be maintenance work, running activities for campers, or working with counselors. "Because I've

been a teacher and a form dean, I do a decent amount of work with the staff," Mr. Hild commented.

When all of the prep work is done, the true joy of camp life begins. Each day, Mr. Hild greets the campers at their group breakfast, delivering the day's announcements. Mr. Hild is a Red Cross Certified lifeguard and a licensed boat operator, so most of his days at Camp Merriwood are spent on the sunny waterfront, driving water-skiing boats and engaging with the

KO says 'au revoir' to French teacher Sarah Phillips

by Ava Cashman '24

As the 2022-2023 school year comes to a close, Kingswood Oxford bids farewell to French teacher Sarah Phillips. After completing her year-long French teaching internship at KO, Ms. Phillips reflected on the many lessons and memories she gained from her experience at KO and how they will serve her well in her future academic ventures.

Ms. Phillips joined KO this year as a French teaching intern, where she taught introductory French classes in the Middle School and the Upper School. Throughout her internship experience, Ms. Phillips was mentored and supported by Middle School French teacher and Associate Head of the Middle School Kathy Dunn,

Upper School French teacher Ryan Brodeur, and Director of Teaching and Learning Heidi Hojnicky. When sharing her KO experience, Ms. Phillips cherished the community she found at Kingswood Oxford. "The Middle School as a whole is very close-knit," she reflected. "All the teachers know each other really well and support each other."

While Ms. Phillips entered KO with a B.A. in Global Studies and Francophone Studies from St. Lawrence University, she learned in her time here that her education would always be evolving. "I learned that, as teachers, even though we officially have completed our education, we always have more to learn," she shared.

One major learning experience for Ms. Phillips came in

the form of coaching. At KO, Ms. Phillips took on assistant coaching roles each season with middle school "B" soccer, girls basketball, and softball—three sports with which Ms. Phillips had minimal coaching experience. Ms. Phillips embraced this challenge as a learning opportunity, growing a new understanding of and love for three new sports.

Ms. Phillips has shown her positive energy and care inside KO's classrooms, but much of her previous educational work has been outdoors. Through outdoor education, Ms. Phillips teaches social-emotional learning in various outdoor activities that are based on adventure, challenge, and teamwork. Ms. Phillips admires how outdoor education allows students to break their self-percep-

tions of being 'good' and 'bad' students. "When you're outdoors doing a team building activity or



Ms. Phillips smiles for the camera on the senior green. Photo by Highpoint.

a ropes course you get to be a new person, different than who you are in the classroom," she shared.

Ms. Phillips admires how Kingswood Oxford incorporates outdoor education into its curriculum through form trips each year.

The future for Ms. Phillips is bright following her French teaching internship at KO. Reflecting on her previous experiences with outdoor education, Ms. Phillips enjoyed the change of pace that classroom teaching brought. As she looks ahead, Ms. Phillips is eager to continue exploring new educational pathways to find her unique career path. Both the KO Middle School and Upper School are so grateful to have had Ms. Phillips on campus this past year, and we look forward to seeing all that she accomplishes in the future!

KO says farewell to Mr. Chiarappa

by Lily Temkin '25

Following his career at KO beginning in 1979, Richard Chiarappa, the music director of the string orchestras, is leaving KO and beginning a new chapter of his life in retirement, consisting of composing some new music and spending time with his family.

When he first came to KO, Mr. Chiarappa conducted the mixed orchestra along with vocal ensembles including Madrigal singers.

During his time at KO, Mr. Chiarappa has made a very large impact on the music program in many different ways. "I was given an orchestra with both upper and lower school students, and the distinction between what a sixth grader could play, and a senior was very noticeable and challenging," he said. After about two years of conducting this mixed orchestra, he told the administration that there needed to be a change. He began to conduct two string orchestras instead,

one consisting of Upper School performers, and one consisting of Middle School performers, and he has enjoyed watching the program grow since then.

Another change that Mr. Chiarappa made during his career was creating our alma mater, "Hail Kingswood Oxford." In 1981, Mr. Chiarappa pointed out to the Head of School at that time that there was no Kingswood Oxford song, just two separate songs from before Kingswood and Oxford were joined together. "I said that we needed our own alma mater, and so I composed it," he said. To keep both of the school's songs and traditions alive, he combined the songs together. "I realized that these ideas have been there before me, so let me gather a little from each, and put it together," Mr. Chiarappa said.

When it comes to the KO community, Mr. Chiarappa has made many strong connections with both his colleagues and students. "I came in two years after [history teacher] Mr. Kyff and

"His passion for conducting and his thorough understanding of music is something I look up to and it is very hard to find in any other teacher."

—Ally LaCroix

[creative arts teacher] Mr. Pierce," he said. "I enjoyed being able to work closely with Mr. Pierce when it came to the music department."

Aside from his colleagues, the bonds that Mr. Chiarappa formed with his students is something that they will reover the course of their several years in the orchestra is something that they

all will remember forever. "Mr. Chiarappa has always been encouraging when it comes to improving my playing," junior violinist Ally LaCroix says. "His passion for conducting and his thorough understanding of music is something I look up to and it is very hard to find in any other teacher."

Emma Levinbook '22 reminisced on the many years she was taught by Mr. Chiarappa, along with the impact he had on her. "Mr. Chiarappa was always a kind, dedicated, and passionate teacher," she said. "He genuinely cared about his students and empowered them to really work hard and practice their music in order to refine their craft and, at the same time, guided them to find joy and pride in the music they were making."

Even though Mr. Chiarappa will no longer be teaching at KO, he has big plans for the future. "For the last three years I have been writing an opera based on a Mark Twain short story that we will be performing excerpts of this summer at the Mark Twain house,"



Mr. Chiarappa smiles for the camera. Photo by Highpoint Pictures.

he said. Along with continuing his work with music and orchestra, he plans on spending more time with his grandchildren and family.

After conducting his final arts night for both Upper and Lower School, students, faculty and parents recognized him for all the hard work he has put into the music department throughout his many years at KO. Even though Mr. Chiarappa will be missed dearly, we look forward to seeing all of his success with his music and opera which will debut on August 30!

New Intro to Finance elective

by Ella Wilson '25

Starting in the fall semester of the 2023-24 school year, KO will be offering a new course titled "Introduction to Finance." Taught by math teacher Sandi Goss, the class will include topics such as investing, economic theory, financial analysis, and so much more.

"We really wanted to give some background on finance as an option for our kids before they leave and enter the real world,"

—Ms. Goss

Over the past few years, Ms. Goss, along with students and administrators such as Head of School Tom Dillow and Head of the Upper School Dan Gleason, has been discussing the possibility of offering a course like this. "We really wanted to give some background on finance as an option for our kids before they leave and enter the real world," Ms. Goss said.

There are already a few clubs at KO focused on business and with such a high level of interest, Ms. Goss knew that she needed to create a class centered around business and finance-related topics. She is still whittling down the options, as Ms. Goss says she wants to work the class down to a couple of major categories.

"At the moment, I have way too many topics," she said, "so obviously I have to scale it

down." Some of the topics she is currently debating are stocks, balance sheets, managing credit cards and checkbooks, and loans.

Although she was expecting strong interest in the class, she definitely was not anticipating the sheer number of students who signed up. "We actually had to run two sections of it, which we weren't anticipating," Ms. Goss said. The class will now be offered in both the fall and spring semesters.

Ms. Goss has already set goals regarding what she hopes students will take away from the course. "One of my biggest hopes is that they realize that starting young is key," she said. Along with that, she wants students to gain a better understanding of how to make smarter financial decisions, whether that be when buying a car or house, looking at colleges, or even looking at career paths and their future.

Ms. Goss is very excited and eager to teach this class, and she anticipates bringing in many guest speakers to talk about how finance plays into their day-to-day lives and jobs. She plans on spending lots of time over the summer fine-tuning the class to make it the best she possibly can for all of those interested!



Ms. Goss flashes a smile at the camera. photo by Highpoint Pictures

Fashionista of the Month: Leo Kollen

by Lily Temkin '25

Being comfortable in your own style and finding what makes you feel the most confident is essential when it comes to the clothing you wear and how you present yourself.

For Form 3 student Leo Kollen, his fashion and style allow him to express himself while showing off many different styles and colors.

In regard to the different stores that Leo likes to shop at, he finds himself normally drawn to American Eagle, H&M, and Uniqlo due to their wide variety of options and colors.

When choosing an outfit, Leo likes to make spontaneous decisions based on his mood and the weather rather than planning too far in advance.

Knowing that he's going to feel confident and comfortable in his outfits is very important when getting ready everyday.

"I love playing with colors and monotone outfits, so being able to choose specific color pairings based on how I'm feeling is really nice," Leo said.

The core colors of his style change with the seasons, favoring earth tones in the fall and winter, and brighter colors such as greens and blues in the spring and summer.

He also chooses brighter prints and patterns during the summer time such as florals.

For staple pieces in Leo's closet, he finds that it's really the textures that make up his style rather than the specific pieces of clothing.

"I really enjoy corduroy, especially in the winter, along with floral patterns," he said.

"I love being able to play around with different textures and shapes in my outfits so that they have more movement



Freshman Leo Kollen strikes a pose while walking the runway in his colorful outfit for Thread Fashion Magazine! photo by Form 5 student Ilianna Brett

and all look a little different."

Recently, Leo walked the runway for thread's Fashion Show, "a common thread," benefiting The Village for Families & Children on Friday, April 21. "It was amazing having Leo walk the runway and be a part of the thread editorial staff this year," said junior Ava Cashman, founder and Editor-in-Chief of thread.

"His personal style shined through on the runway and his positive energy was contagious."

On the runway, Leo wore a maroon button down over a white top, coupled with tan pants and a pair of sunglasses showing off a more summery look as the weather begins to get warmer..

"Discover your fashion not from others, but from yourself," Leo said.

He encourages everyone to find their own style for themselves as having your own individual style can help you in so many different ways.

Phone scammers are striking locally

by Abbie Schiff '25

Are you among the millions of Americans who have fallen victim to phone scams? A recent report from TrueCaller has revealed that over 68 million Americans have lost money in 2022 solely to these fraudulent schemes, with one in three people being targeted at some point. And if you think getting scammed once is bad enough, imagine being targeted repeatedly – 20% of victims report being targeted more than once. These alarming statistics highlight the growing prevalence of phone scams and the need for consumers to be vigilant of the dangers of unknown phone calls. I set out to talk to a range of people affected by phone scams to see what their experience was like, and I discovered that many people I know have been affected by phone scams.

First, I spoke with my aunt, Dr. Vanessa Robb, who got a call one day from the Newington Police Department's actual phone number, claiming that she had failed to appear as an expert witness in a federal court case and had been issued citations for contempt of court. On the call, they went into great detail about this supposed "case" and claimed there was a signed subpoena that was given to her on Feb. 22, at 1:54 p.m. The scammers used real officer and judge names, as well as her personal information, which made the scam seem more legitimate. The scammers requested Dr. Robb to come to the police department to verify her signature. She was confused at first but complied with their requests because at the time it was hard to know if it was a scam.

On the way to the police station, the scammers said they

needed her to go to a Walmart and request a bond payment to freeze the citations. Dr. Robb did not feel comfortable stepping inside

"I think it's really important to talk to the people in your life who might not be as tech-savvy and just inform them about phone scams because they really are targeting a lot of different people."

—Dr. Schiff

and therefore told the caller that she was going to go to the police station first. She started driving and the caller told her that she was disobeying police orders and demanded that she turn around or else she would be in deep trouble. This was when she realized it was definitely a scam. She continued her way to the police station and the caller finally told her that it was just a "prank." Dr. Robb was relieved that the call was not real and that she avoided getting scammed. She felt more educated about phone scams after the experience. Although she was never asked for any personal information or money, the fact that the scammers had done their research and mimicked the police department's

phone number was concerning. This story serves as a reminder to be cautious of elaborate phone scams and to always verify the information before taking action.

Scammers have become increasingly sophisticated in their tactics to steal money from unsuspecting individuals, especially those who are not as tech-savvy and those of older age demographics. This was the case for a grandparent of a student at KO who wishes to remain unnamed, who almost fell victim to a phone scam in early April. The caller posed as her bank and requested that she withdraw several thousand dollars from her account. The caller instructed her to go to a specific bank location in West Hartford to withdraw the money. She was also told to send her bank information in order to help them fix her account. The grandmother was hesitant but drove to the bank and spoke with a teller who explained that it was a scam. Thankfully, the grandmother did not withdraw any money.

I spoke to the granddaughter, who attends KO, and she was unsettled by how close her grandmother was to being scammed. "They're just really scary because I feel a lot of these scams are really targeting older people just because they probably are not as tech-savvy," the granddaughter said. "We were lucky that the bank teller was so kind to her and that she was smart enough to go there, but it really could have gone poorly. So, it was just a very scary situation." Fortunately, in this case, the grandmother was able to avoid falling victim to the scam with the help of the bank teller. However, the situation serves as a reminder to always be cautious when receiving unsolicited calls and to verify any requests with

the appropriate institution or organization before taking action.

Receiving a phone call from a government agency claiming to be investigating you can be quite unnerving, as my mom, Dr. Julie Schiff, experienced on March 6, 2023. The call was from someone claiming to be from the Drug Enforcement Association (DEA) and was forwarded to her by an employee at her front desk. The caller said that there had been an investigation taking place for the last 40 days and they needed to talk to her about this ongoing investigation, in which she was supposedly involved. Her staff member, Marissa, informed her that it was likely a scam and provided a phone number to call back.

Dr. Schiff googled the name, Greg Mallard, and found that he was the head of the DEA in the El Paso division, but the phone number's area code was from Virginia which was questionable. Dr. Schiff did not provide any personal information and reported the incident to the DEA. She was grateful that her employee sent her the call and did not give the caller any information.

With phone scams becoming increasingly prevalent, it's crucial to know how to spot them and protect yourself from becoming a victim. Scammers are constantly coming up with new tactics to deceive people, making it difficult to differentiate a scam call from a real message. However, there are several measures you can take to avoid phone scams and protect yourself from fraud. Dr. Robb said that if you are not absolutely positive about who the person calling you is, then you should not let them have any information about yourself that could get you into any problems. "Just don't give

any personal information or send money anywhere, or you could get yourself into trouble," she said. Even if the phone number is correct or the person calling you says that they are a reputable person, it does not mean that you should trust it, since phone scammers continue to grow more intelligent in finding ways to scam their victims.

The Kingswood Oxford student also believes that there are ways you can avoid yourself and others getting phone scams. "I think it's really important to talk to the people in your life who might not be as tech-savvy and just inform them about phone scams because they really are targeting a lot of different people," she said. "I would also say if you get called and the person is posing as a corporation or a bank, call the actual corporation first and confirm if it's real because sometimes it is real and there are things that you need to do, but it's always better to be safe than sorry." Dr. Schiff says to hang up and call the official organization using their official phone number to verify the legitimacy of the call in order to make sure that you do not give up any personal information that could lead to you getting scammed.

Many times, phone scammers will try to get money or information out of you by scaring you with situations you could be in trouble for. "If it's super-official, then they're probably not going to call you," Dr. Schiff said. Be cautious of unknown phone callers and make sure that the person calling you is who they really say they are. Callers are becoming very intelligent in faking their identities. As long as you do not give any of your personal information, you should be able to avoid and recognize phone scams.

KO competition through the decades

by Alex Doering '26

Whether it be playing on the field or cheering in the stands, athletics are a key part of each student's KO experience today. But have you ever wondered what sports were like at KO in past decades? I sat down with KO teachers who also attended KO in the 80s and 90s to hear their perspectives on how KO's athletics and competition have changed over time.

English teacher David Hild '80 went to high school at KO when success in sports was more of a draw to students in the community and taken more seriously. "Back then, sports were a serious thing for a lot of people," Mr. Hild said. "I think kids and the school as a whole cared about sports more." Mr. Hild was a football and lacrosse player in his time at KO and sports games were always big events.

Traditions like Hewett Day and the KITs are still here

now, but back then they were on a whole different level. Mr. Hild explained that Hewett Day and the KITs were events that everybody in the entire school went to for the whole day. Everyone loved to show support for the competing teams, and they would walk back and forth from game to game to support all KO teams.

When I talked with creative arts teacher Greg Scranton '94, he shared a lot about his sports experience at KO in the 90s. Mr. Scranton made the hockey team as a freshman, and with that came many fun opportunities and traditions. "I was one of a few kids who made the hockey team as a freshman and hazing was still a thing," Mr. Scranton explained. "I mean, it wasn't bad, but they would shave your head. They were nice to me and gave me a mohawk, which wasn't bad because some of the other kids got really bad haircuts." Mr. Scranton also played lacrosse at KO. Starting when he was a freshman, there were

enough lacrosse players to make a full freshman team that went undefeated. Mr. Scranton reminisced about his sophomore year when he made the varsity lacrosse team and traveled to Australia. The team spent about two weeks traveling around Australia playing lacrosse games and sightseeing in all the different cities they visited.

There were different sports that were offered to students that aren't offered now like gymnastics, skiing, and wrestling. The fun traditions around KO's campus didn't stop with just the sports teams: sometimes even the faculty would join in. Mr. Scranton remembers a co-ed faculty-student volleyball tournament that they played in. "We were the underdogs, there were some stacked teams and we just kept winning and winning and winning," Mr. Scranton said. "We played the best team in the finals and we beat them and they were so mad. And it was my chemistry teacher. And he was like, 'You guys are such poor

sports, because you didn't even shake our hands right after you won.'" As you can see, competition at KO extended beyond sports teams. Another competition that the students enjoyed was running the Senior Green: seeing who could step foot on the green without getting caught. Mr. Scranton described that day vividly for me. "The first spring day when it was X period and sunny, all the freshman boys, including myself, would line up around the green in front of Roberts," he said. "You're kind of looking at each other, and then some brave soul just runs hopes to make it across. And if you don't make it, you get pummeled or strung up on the flag pole by the seniors that are chasing after you. Some of those kids were fast so I had to keep running and you had to just keep running until they stop because they got tired."

At KO, despite sports teams still maintaining success at the Founders League and New England levels, the competitive spirit and

the will to win have lessened in previous years. Additionally, while many athletic traditions remain, they aren't looked forward to by students as much as in the past.

I have been a part of the KO community since 2019 and the traditions that have been kept alive are Hewett Day and the KITs, but there is not nearly as much school spirit as Mr. Hild and Mr. Scranton described.

It's sad to see that the school has made the shift because sports used to be a big part of KO. "KO was more of a sports-oriented school," he said. "Now the school is academically harder than it was then but overall I think KO now is probably nicer and less competitive than it was," Mr. Hild said. Mr. Hild and Mr. Scranton were both student-athletes that valued their time at KO. Hearing about how KO was in two different decades helps to show what the experience was 30 to 40 years ago and how the athletics and competitiveness of KO's history compare to today.

Congratulations Seniors!

College Acceptances for the Class of 2023:

**Schools in bold indicate matriculation*

Albertus Magnus College
American International College
American University
Andrews University
Arizona State University
Assumption University
Auburn University
Augustana University
Bard College
Baylor University
Belmont University
Bentley University
Berklee College of Music
Berry College
Binghamton University
Boston College
Boston University
Brandeis University
Bryant University
Case Western Reserve University
Catholic University of America
Central Connecticut State University
Champlain College
Chapman University
Chestnut Hill College
Citadel Military College of South Carolina
Clark University
Clarkson University
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
Colby College
College of Charleston
Colorado College
Connecticut College
Curry College
Dickinson College
Drexel University
Duquesne University
Eastern Connecticut State University
Elms College
Elon University
Emerson College
Endicott College
Fairfield University
Flagler College
Florida Atlantic University
Florida Southern College
Fordham University
Franklin Pierce University
Furman University
Georgetown University
George Washington University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Gettysburg College
Gordon College
Grinnell College
High Point University
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
Indiana University (Bloomington)
Ithaca College
James Madison University
Johns Hopkins University
Keene State College
Lafayette College
Lawrence University
Lehigh University
Liberty University
Lipscomb University
Loyola University Maryland
Lynn University
Macalester College
Manhattan College
Manhattan School of Music
Marist College
Marymount Manhattan College
Merrimack College
Miami University (Oxford)
Michigan State University
Middlebury College
Montana State University
New Jersey Institute of Technology
New York Institute of Technology
New York University
Nichols College
Northeastern University
Norwich University
Oberlin College
Occidental College
Pace University (Westchester)
Penn State University
Point Park University
Providence College
Purdue University
Queens University of Charlotte
Quinnipiac University
Reed College
Regent University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rhodes College
Rivier University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Roger Williams University
Rollins College
Rutgers University
Salve Regina University
San Diego State University
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
School of Visual Arts
Seton Hall University
Siena College
Skidmore College
Southern Connecticut State University
Southern Methodist University
St. Anselm College
St. Lawrence University
St. Michael's College
Stonehill College
Stony Brook University
Suffolk University
SUNY Cortland
SUNY Fredonia
Syracuse University
Texas State University
The Ohio State University
The University of Alabama
The University of Edinburgh
The University of Tampa
Trinity College
Tufts University
Tulane University of Louisiana
Union College
United States Air Force Academy
United States Military Academy at West Point
University of Aberdeen
University of Arizona
University of California (Davis)
University of California (San Diego)
University of California (Santa Barbara)
University of California (Irvine)
University of Central Florida
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Delaware
University of Florida
University of Glasgow
University of Hartford
University of Houston
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
University of Maine
University of Maryland (College Park)
University of Massachusetts-Amherst
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota (Twin Cities)
University of Mississippi
University of New Hampshire
University of New Haven
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina Wilmington
University of Oklahoma
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rhode Island
University of Rochester
University of South Carolina
University of St. Andrews
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of Wisconsin (Madison)
Villanova University
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Wake Forest University
Wells College
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Wesleyan University
Western Connecticut State University
Western New England University
Wheaton College, IL
Wheaton College, MA
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Samuel P. Bromberg



Congratulations Sam!
We are so proud of you!

Love,
Hazel, Henry, Madison, Mom and Dad

THANK YOU, KO!



Congratulations Luke
and the Class of 2023!

“A pleasure is full grown
only when it is remembered.”
- C.S. Lewis

Love,
Mom, Dad, Elise, & Elyanne

Congratulations, Christian!
Let's go Tigers!



**Congratulations to the
Class of 2023!**

**Wishing you continued success in the
years to come.**

Live, Laugh, Love

*Gratitude is a must (Yeah)
Mi see blessings fall by mi right hand.
-Koffee*

**To the faculty and staff at KO, you
have had a profound impact on my life
during my 7 years here. With lots of
gratitude, I extend my heartfelt thanks
for your support during my time at
KO. This is as much a win for you
as it was for me.**

Thanks,

-Jolie

Congratulations Alyssa and the Class of 2023!



Always ready for the next adventure
Loves KO and has truly made her mark
Yearning to learn and make a difference in this world
Smart, supportive and spectacular
So many outstanding accomplishments
Awesome beyond words

We love you
Mom, Dad, Lily & Gigi
LOLAKAHASAEIBASAS

Chapman, Patel win top senior awards



Tess Chapman smiles at the start of the year. Photo by Highpoint Photos.

Seniors Tess Chapman and Raj Patel won the school's top citizenship awards at the Prize Assembly on Tuesday, May 23.

Tess won the Primus Medal, presented by Edith Greenough Lewis to the student in the sixth form who has contributed most during the past year to the life of the school.

Raj won the Gold Seal, which is given to a student in the sixth form for outstanding qualities of character.

Awards received by other students are as follows:

The Brandeis University Book Award for social action and civic engagement is given to a member of the Fifth Form who has demonstrated academic excellence and a commitment to community service – Oskar Ruser.

The Dartmouth Club Book Award is given to a member of the Fifth Form in recognition of outstanding academic and leadership qualities, coupled with imagination, concern for others, and loyalty to school, family and friends – Ava Cashman.

The Harvard Club of Northern Connecticut Prize is given to that member of the Fifth Form who combines excellence in scholarship with significant achievement in other fields – Ashley Buckingham.

The University of Pennsylvania Book Award is given to a member of the Fifth Form who has demonstrated academic excellence and innovative involvement in extracurricular activities – Chelsea O'Donnell.

The St. Lawrence University Book Award is given to a member of Form 5 who has demonstrated academic excellence and innovative involvement in extra-curricular activities – Michael Bzowycykj.

The Smith College Book Award is given to an outstanding junior who exemplifies the academic achievement, leadership

qualities, and concern for others that characterize the thousands of women who have graduated from Smith College – Aashni Patel.

The Trinity Club of Hartford Prize is given to a member of the Fifth Form who has developed and practiced a true interest in the principles of good government – Emma Barringer.

The Yale Club of Hartford Prize is given to a member of the Fifth Form in recognition of scholastic achievement, leadership, effective teamwork and organizational abilities – Leo Zhang.

The Williams Memorial Prize for Mathematics, given in memory of W. O. Williams and in the name of F.I. Catlin '43 and R.J. Catlin '43, is given for excellence in mathematics to a student in the Upper School – Johnny Kung.

The Critchfield Prize for Science is given by Horace E. Rockwell '39 in memory of his classmate, Thomas R. Critchfield, to the student who has performed outstandingly in science – Hailey Williams.

The Goodman Banks English Prize is given to a student in the Upper School for excellence in the field of English – Tess Chapman.

The Terwilliger Prize, given in the name of R.C. Terwilliger '33, is given to a student in the Upper School for excellence in English prose – Maggie Dwyer.

The Brendan Gill '32 Writer of Promise Award, in memory of the renowned writer and essayist, Brendan C. Gill '32, is given by the Gill family to the Upper School student who has shown the most interest and promise in developing his or her writing craft – Danielle James.

The Herman Paul Kopplemann Award is given in honor of Mr. Kopplemann who served five terms in Congress promoting social policy issues and was driven by a fundamental belief that politics is the proper avenue to promote the general welfare. The award

goes to that member of the newspaper staff who has outstanding promise in the art of communication. – Jordan DiMauro.

The Stewart Prize for Public Speaking is given by P.R. Stewart '32 to a student in the Upper School who is judged to be the best public speaker – Johnny Kung.

The Googins Award for Distinguished Service in Forensic Union is named after KO faculty member and Forensic Union founder, Robert Googins who served Kingswood Oxford for over four decades as a teacher, coach and advisor. In his memory, it is awarded to a member of the Sixth Form who has excelled in formal debate and who, like Mr. Googins, has served the Forensic Union with particular loyalty, enthusiasm, and dedication – Luke Roen.

The Conklin Prize, endowed in honor of Mr. and Mrs. William P. Conklin, is given to a student for excellence in United States history – Dhruv Suryadevara and Loretta Szych.

The William Ainsworth Greene Memorial Prize, given by his three sons, is given to that member of the Fifth or Sixth Form who has shown the greatest interest in international and current affairs.

For scholarship and excellence in the study of economics – Ben Margolis.

For scholarship and excellence in international relations and world cultures – Bella Theodorou.

For scholarship and excellence in current events and public policy – Shoshana Levy.

The Abraham Kopplemann Prize, endowed by Mr. Kopplemann, is given to that student who has demonstrated interest in and awareness of the fundamental principles of democratic government.

For scholarship and excellence in democratic principles – Tess Chapman.

For scholarship and excellence in governmental philosophies and political affairs. – Aidan Ladewig.

The Wyper Prize, endowed in the name of James Wyper Jr. '36 and John Wyper '38, is given to an Upper School student for excellence in Latin – Sophia Glazier and Andrew LaCroix.

The Bissell Prize, endowed by Mr. Richard M. Bissell, Jr., is given to a student in the Upper School who has excelled in the study of French – Alice McClure.

The Ernest W. Smith Prize for Spanish, endowed by Ernest W. Smith, Jr., is given to a student in the Upper School who has excelled in the study of Spanish – Hyder Jafri and Keira Sullivan.

The Chinese Language and Culture Prize is given to the Upper School student who, during his or her time at Kingswood Oxford, has excelled in the study of Chinese, both by demonstrating academic strength in the Chinese language and by embracing the culture of China – Ben Margolis.

The Mixed Chorus Award is given to a student in the Upper School for outstanding service to the Mixed Chorus – Alice McClure.



Raj Patel poses for a shot on picture day. Photo by Highpoint Photos.

The Kingswood Oxford Band Award presented to the instrumentalist who has demonstrated outstanding musicianship, leadership, and dependability as a member of the concert band or wind ensemble – Kodi Ezegbo and Sattah Phouthakoun.

The Louis Armstrong Jazz Award is presented to the instrumentalist who has demonstrated outstanding musicianship, leadership and dependability as a member of the jazz band – Jaeden Curcio and Jack Gold.

The National School Orchestra Award, given to a student for outstanding dedication, service and musical contributions to the orchestra – Bella Theodorou.

The Music Award is given to a boy in the Upper School for his outstanding musical ability – Johnny Kung.

The Jane Hamilton Fisk Award is given to a girl in the Upper School for her outstanding ability or interest in music or musical organizations – Faith Potter.

The Edith and Saul Shulansky Performing Arts Award is given to that member of the Fifth Form judged to be the most accomplished performer by the arts faculty – Anna Tippner.

The William A. Greene Memorial Prize for Dramatics is given to that student in the Sixth Form who has contributed most to the Dramatic Society – Avery Schiff and Frank Pu.

The Technical Theater Award is given to a member of the graduating class who has demonstrated talent, dedication, and a thirst for knowledge in the support of the performing arts – Kaitlyn Finnerty and Paul Giliberto.

The Eli Udolf Art Award is given by Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Udolf in memory of his father, Mr. Eli Udolf, to that student in the Sixth Form whose portfolio of work demonstrates creativity approaching professional caliber – Lucia Martinez-Castro.

The C. Francis Beatty, Jr. Photography Award is given to a student for excellence in photography during the current school year – Abby Baier.

The Robert A. Lazear Award is given to a senior who by example and dedication has contributed the most to Kingswood Oxford athletics – Kyra Dunnirvine.

The William R. MacDonald Prize is given by the Class of 1962 in honor of William R. MacDonald, faculty member from 1931 to 1962, and is awarded to that member of the graduating class who has proven to be an outstanding athlete and who best exemplifies diligence in practice, sportsmanship, and spirit of competition – Chase Fountain.

The Senior Award is awarded to a three-sport athlete who demonstrated a positive attitude, outstanding sportsmanship and dedication to team effort – Aidan Ladewig and Will Jacobs.

The Andrew Blodgett Award is given in memory of Andrew Blodgett III of the Class of 1958 to the student in the Fourth Form who possesses qualities of helpfulness, friendliness and good citizenship – Christian Gordon and Stella Zimmer.

The Aanon J. Ahl Award is given in memory of Aanon J. Ahl, Class of 1993, to a member of Form 4 whose enthusiasm, curiosity and passion for learning inspired his or her classmates and teachers – Sasha Dausey.

The Graham Anthony, Jr. Prize is given in memory of Graham Anthony, Jr. '39, to the outstanding student in the Fourth Form – Ysabel Albert and Christian Gingeleskie.

The Class of 1988 Award, endowed by that class in their Third Form year, is given to that student of the Third Form who possesses qualities of friendliness, helpfulness, and good citizenship – Ishaan

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2023 Prize Assembly honors students

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Bafna and Kate Dempsey-Weiner.

The First Year Award is given by Mr. Nathaniel Salton-sall II to that Upper School student who, during the first full year at Kingswood Oxford, has shown strong academic achievement and has displayed responsibility, maturity, cooperation and loyalty – Sophie Chen.

The Jeffrey Bittner Prize is given in memory of Jeffrey Bittner '92 by Middlebury College, where he was a member of the Class of 1996, to an exceptional student in the sophomore class who possess a strong sense of self, determination and selflessness – Joella Asapokhai and Zaire Ramiz.

The Gretchen Bauver Award is given in honor of Gretchen Bauver, math teacher at Kingswood Oxford from 1972 to 1992, to the eighth-grade student who has shown the most growth in the field of math – Lila Klinzmann.

The Arlene Lipton Award is given in memory of Arlene Lipton by her husband Michael, son Jonathan '88 and daughter Suzanne '93, is awarded to a student entering Form 3 from Form 2 whose service to others in the Kingswood Oxford community and beyond to the larger community, exemplifies Mrs. Lipton's extraordinary legacy of service. – Aliza Rashid.

The Anounshjka Mead Writing Award is given to that

student who has contributed most to the literary life of the Middle School – Lidia Martinez-Castro.

The Middle School Achievement Award is given to that student who has demonstrated the most personal and academic growth during his or her Middle School career – Ida Chapman and Henry Jacobs.

The Annual Alumni Character Awards are given by the Kingswood Oxford Alumni Association to two students in the Second Form for their leadership, maturity, citizenship and concern for the welfare of the school – Sarah Balog and Molly Palmer.

The First Year Award is given to a Middle School student who in his or her first year at Kingswood Oxford has shown strong academic achievement and has displayed responsibility, maturity, cooperation and loyalty – Alexis Nisyrios and Jessica Lin.

The Richard C. Buckley Award is given in memory of Richard C. Buckley, Class of 1980, to the senior who possess qualities of loyalty, good humor, courage and the ability to accept both success and defeat gracefully – Jacob Joseph and Johnny Kung.

The Robert A. Falk Prize, given in memory of Robert Falk '80, is awarded to the Sixth Form student who has excelled in journalism and has been an active participant in the competitive sports program at the school – Keira Sullivan.

The Nelson P. Farquhar Award, presented by the community government, is given that that member of the Sixth Form who has given outstanding service to the community – Faith Potter and Alyssa Temkin.

The Class of 1958 Prize, given in memory of Richard B. Bulkeley III, is given to that member of the Sixth Form who possesses qualities of modesty, reliability, and integrity – Maggie Dwyer and Stephanie Lu.

The Merritt Prize, established by Mr. Joseph Merritt in the names of Robert P. Merritt '29 and Philip J. Merritt '33, is given to that member of the Sixth Form who best exemplifies the results of the Kingswood Oxford education – Frank Pu.

The Fortiter Prize, founded by Mr. Francis Goodwin Smith in the names of three sons, all graduates of the school, is presented to that member of the Sixth Form who has developed and displayed the qualities of courage and perseverance – Annabelle Jacobs.

The Turhan Michael Ergin Award is given to that member of the Senior Class who combines an enthusiasm for athletics and the performing arts or visual arts with a sincere love of people and a friendly, outgoing nature – Eli Brandt and McKenzie Campbell.

The Tyler C. Tingley Award is given to that member of the Senior Class who, in addition to excelling in academics, has, by

dint of his or her selflessness and dedication, embodied the Kingswood Oxford goal of “caring beyond self” and has helped other members of the community to flourish and grow – Kaitlyn Finnerty and Chayse Shamleffer.

The Stewart Lindsay Jr. Award is awarded to a student in the Upper School who demonstrates the same qualities of scholarship, leadership, and thoughtfulness that Mr. Lindsay embodies during his career at Kingswood Oxford as a teacher, coach and administrator – Abby Baier.

The Katherine Long Day Award is given in memory of Katherine Long Day '28 to that student in the Fifth Form who, in the judgment of the Head of School and Faculty, has displayed exceptional qualities of character and integrity – Nicholas Tippner.

The Jonathan Downs Prize, endowed by the friends of Jonathan Downs, is given to the student of the Fifth Form who has contributed most to the class in helpfulness, good fellowship, and humor – Bassil Chughtai.

The Dux Prize is awarded to the student in the senior class with the highest academic average for the year – Johnny Kung.

The Robert B. Swain III Memorial Award honors that continuing teacher in his or her first five years of teaching overall, who best exemplifies Bobby Swain's outstanding attributes as a student and teacher: a serious,

self-disciplined approach to learning and a sense of human–a combination that enabled him to inspire in others a spirit of cooperation which made scholarly disciplines a pursuit both joyous and rewarding – Sharon Migdal.

The Charles W. Collins Award is presented to a K-O faculty member for excellence in teaching – Ryan Brodeur.

The Joseph and Jo-anne Alissi Coaching Award honors that returning coach who best exemplifies Joseph and Jo-anne Alissi's outstanding contributions to Kingswood Oxford: Joseph,

who spent 48 years as a teacher, coach, athletic director and cherished friend, and Jo-anne, who spent 22 years in the athletic department as a coach and assistant athletic director. Joseph was a Springfield College and National Hall-Of-Fame wrestler and official and was awarded the Founders League Swan Award in 2002 recognizing him for his outstanding work in developing leadership and character in his students. The Jo-anne Alissi Field Hockey Award was created in

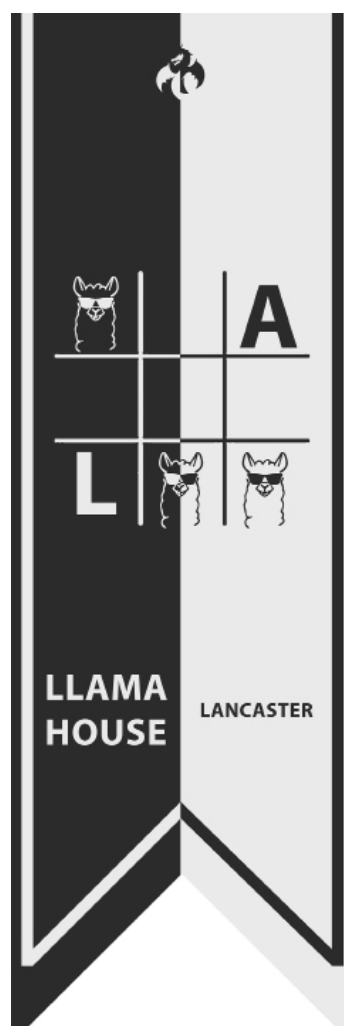
Jo-anne's honor to be given to the player who best embodies her selfless spirit and enthusiasm that she shows. The award honors that returning coach who best exemplifies Joseph and Jo-anne's sports-

manship, professionalism, enthusiasm, dedication and positive impact they had on every athlete and student. – Cameron Biondi.

Final House Scores



437.5



390



360



147.5

Educational, ethical challenges of AI

by Sasha Dausey '25

The ethical challenges of artificial intelligence (AI) are significant and multifaceted. One key concern is the potential for biased or misleading content generated by AI algorithms, which may perpetuate stereotypes, misinformation, or discrimination. Additionally, with the issue of AI-generated content, ownership and plagiarism arises, as AI systems can replicate existing articles without proper attribution.

These factors all contribute to the growing awareness of AI's influence. AI poses difficult and complex questions to general society, but more specifically academic institutions, today. In fact, the first 54 words of this article were written by the infamous ChatGPT. Thus, as technology advances, education systems need to take into account the capabilities of Artificial Intelligence.

In the KO community, the use of ChatGPT has gotten a lot of attention, and Head of the Upper School Dan Gleason hopes to create a more open dialogue between students and faculty to address these new changes.

The results of a schoolwide poll show that many students use ChatGPT for brainstorming or generating ideas for their schoolwork. Other popular uses were for writing and essays, as well as math. "I use it for citing sources, finding basic information or combing the web, taking notes, getting ideas, spellchecking, and fixing grammar," one student said.

For as much controversy as it is causing in the community, around 83% of students and teachers have never used or rarely use AI, academically or otherwise. However, many student responses noted the two "extreme" impacts.

Some negative reactions to the use of AI include concerns about academic integrity, espe-

cially considering the effects in application processes with KO Admissions and college counselors. Teachers and administrators are still seeking ways to limit the dishonest uses of this tool. "We want students to learn how to use it productively, but not to do so in a way that replaces their own critical thinking, writing, or research skills," one teacher said.

Dr. Gleason agrees, saying that plagiarism could be a potential issue facing KO teachers. "Right now, it seems like a version of SparkNotes in a way, but one that can be customized to your needs," he said. This deficit of student work can become a major issue if not addressed. Dr. Gleason noted that there have been a number of conversations around the use of AI at KO, involving Dean of Students Kata Baker and department chairs.

programs are becoming increasingly unreliable. In a New York Times experiment on Google's Bard, the same question produced two very different responses. While the first answer included wrong information and a fabricated quote, the second produced a false year of an event and left analysts with half a response.

This undependable use of artificial intelligence chatbots can have effects in the classroom, but could also make it easier for teachers to recognize the use of AI in their assignments.

Aside from KO students, a survey conducted by Walton Family Foundation uncovered that approximately 40% of teachers use ChatGPT on a weekly basis for a variety of purposes. Furthermore, this research helps to showcase why educational systems must adapt to

permanently remove the AI without becoming a premium member of Snapchat, and thus paying a fee.

Additionally, several parents find this troubling due to the fact that 60% of American teens use Snapchat. Thus, My AI is directly experimenting with children and their relationship with an AI machine. However, the founder of Weekly Advice for Young Entrepreneurs, Sinead Bovell, urged people to consider AI's impact. "Chatbots are not your friend," she said simply.

One student at KO disagreed with this sentiment. Junior Maia Killory recently published a KO News article focusing on the positive benefit of AI technology in the future. "AI is often villainized," she said. "However, AI is actually beneficial to classroom environments. Its technology

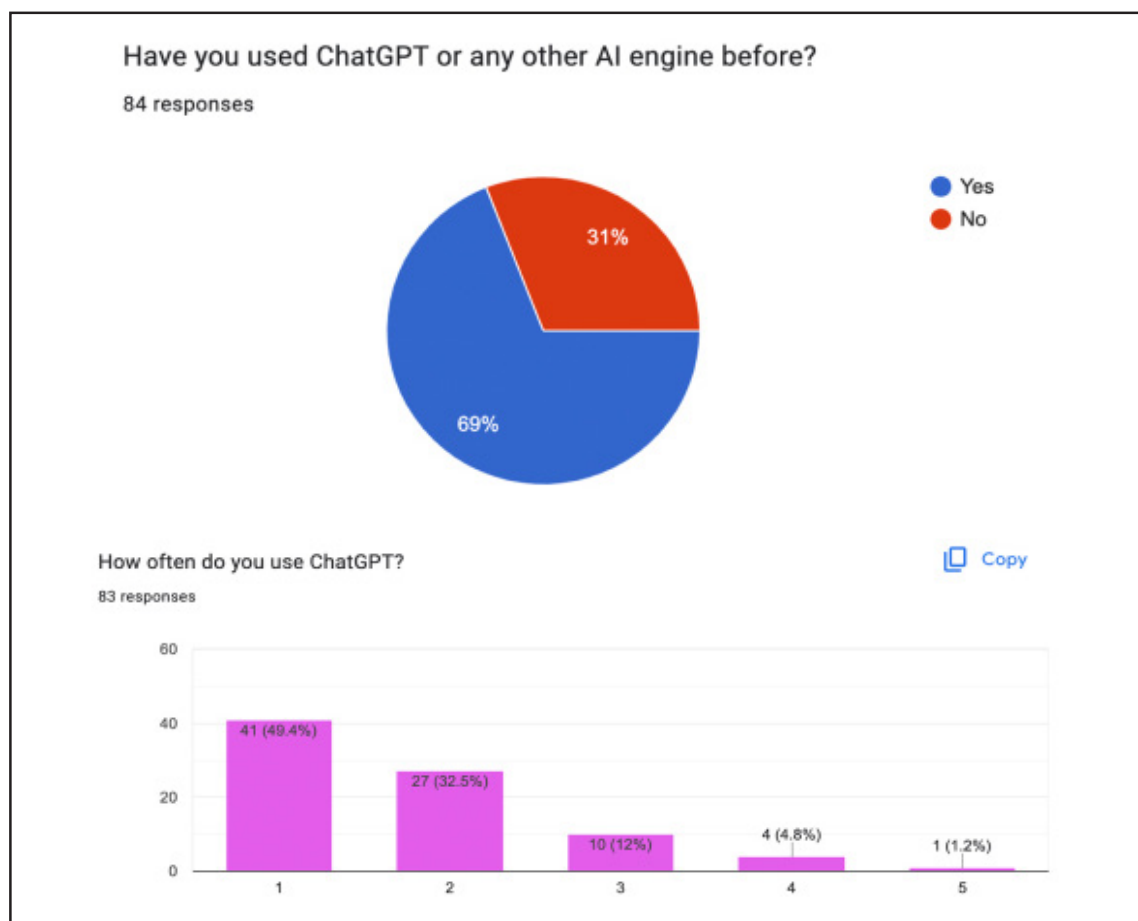
allow them to only write, edit, and revise one part at a time, which works to prevent the use of artificial intelligence for an entire essay or paragraph. Teachers may find it easier to recognize the use of AI engines if assessing in this way.

Although it seems like AI could only have small impacts because of its low usage rates at schools and jobs, once its use becomes integral to societal function, humans will form a reliance on this technology.

"Top academics and researchers behind the leading artificial intelligence took a massive

"We want students to learn how to use it productively, but not to do so in a way that replaces their own critical thinking, writing, or research skills."

-Anonymous Teacher



86 people responded to a school wide survey about their use of Artificial Intelligence machines and Chat GPT. Several people responded to their use of Chat GPT, with 1 meaning never and 5 meaning daily. Photo courtesy of Sasha Dausey.

"AI is often villainized. However, AI is actually beneficial to classroom environments. Its technology can digest complex information, making it more simplistic. This can actually increase understanding and comprehension."

-Maia Killory

Beyond its impact at KO, artificial intelligence is likely to have major effects on the rest of the world as well. Issues like AI hallucination (spread of fake news by AI engines) and program error must be addressed before technology impacts human lives.

AI hallucination is the spread of fake news by AI engines, and it is an increasingly recognized problem in many online programs. "This technology, called generative AI, relies on a complex algorithm that analyzes the way humans put words together on the internet," New York Times reporters Karen Weise and Cade Metz wrote.

Artificial intelligence is known to fabricate information and provide false sources in its responses to chatbot users. "AI and graphics could be harnessed to generate persuasive, realistic renderings of political leaders saying things they had not said," Microsoft writer Eric Horvitz said.

Because the misinformation AI engines make is added to global internet intelligence, these

growing and complex problems associated with AI technology. "The survey also found 63% of students and 72% of teachers agreed with the sentiment that ChatGPT is 'just another example of why we can't keep doing things the old way for schools in the modern world,'" journalist Kayla Jimenez from USA Today wrote.

Additionally, AI is finding its way in students' social lives, specifically with the new creation of Snapchat's "My AI." This AI machine acts like a "friend" to the user, answering the user's questions and sending responses to the photos the user sends to it. However, these responses are not general; instead, the response specifically relates to what was sent in the photo.

This program specifically presents problems due to its very nature. Users may forget they are conversing with a machine because of its specific responses. According to an article by CNN, many Snapchat users are demanding an end to this feature. However, users cannot

digest complex information, making it more simplistic. This can actually increase understanding and comprehension."

However, it cannot be denied that AI is a significant issue for the future. In order to combat these issues, educators must work to find solutions that limit the use of AI in students' assignments. One idea that seems to be the most successful is personalizing assignments to be more individualized to the student and their work. With the errors in information from AI, the student would be tasked with doing their own research to make a unique connection rather than research a topic and craft an argument.

A similar alternative would be for teachers to craft more creative assignments that the capabilities of AI often overlook.

These shortcomings can include lack of expressing or assessing emotion and using other cognitive skills in responses.

A final option would be to assess students' writing in a more structured process. This would

survey," Dr. Gleason said, "and about half of those surveyed stated that there was a 10% greater chance of human extinction from future AI systems."

While this staggering statistic can give some pause, Dr. Gleason also mentioned what still has to be done to fully understand AI. "It can be used in powerful ways," he said, "and we're not sure what it can do with all those scary and potentially tantalizing skills."

A more positive lens among responses to ChatGPT, from students and teachers alike, surrounds the possibilities for use in the classroom and other academic settings. "It allows for more efficiency and more in-depth understanding of topics," a student said. "It should be accepted with wide arms."

Sophomore Andy Chen recognizes all of AI's uses in more personal settings as well. "There's a lot of kinds of AI, not just ChatGPT," he said. "There's also graphic generation, and there are a lot of different companies in this." This engine generates pieces that can be used as inspiration and for creativity in arts classes.

There is still so much yet to learn about artificial intelligence, and its implications for education systems around the world, but for now, its capabilities have allowed for more freedoms in the classroom.

"I would like to explore the creative side of these AI features," an anonymous teacher said. "I need time to really research, but I hope to use it in a way that breaks open this stigma that it is all bad."



Shortstop Hailey Williams chucks the ball to first as she warms up for a home game. Photo courtesy of KO Flickr.

Players of the Moment:

Senior Hailey Williams and senior Mac Louis

by Alyssa Temkin '23
and Sru Tokala '25



Senior outfielder Mac Louis takes a wide stance at the plate during a home game. Photo by Kris Wolff.

Hailey Williams

Devoted to the team and passionate about the sport, senior short-stop and pitcher Co-captain Hailey Williams is a valuable member of the varsity softball team. With many years of experience, Williams avidly supports and contributes to the team both socially and athletically.

Williams started playing tee-ball when she was four years old and began playing softball when she was old enough to play on the minors softball team. She has played on multiple teams, and currently she is a part of the CT Tigers club team, which always keeps her very busy.

Softball is important to Williams as she loves going into every game with a positive mindset. "One of my favorite things about softball is the mentality of 'next pitch, next play'; even though games get rough sometimes and you're not playing your best I always try to remember this very valuable saying," she said. Additionally, Williams loves the excitement of playing short-stop, with the endless energy she has to have for that position.

Supporting all of her teammates and being a leader is one of Williams' main reasons for why she loves playing for the KO softball team. "I love hyping everyone up before a game," she said. "I don't just want to be a captain

for the team but I want to share my love and passion for the sport with all of my teammates. I want them to love the game and have the drive to play well and win."

Head Coach Jason Bradley truly believes that Williams' impact on the team is both on the field and off. "Her fun, loving, positive attitude is always infectious to teammates," he said. "Her impact on the field as one of the best defensive shortstops in the league helps the team impact games." According to Coach Bradley, Williams' best quality she contributes to the team is consistently bringing positivity. "Hailey is always thinking about how she can help impact the team in a positive way, whether that be holding us a little accountable or if that is picking people up," he said. "Hailey has been a cornerstone of our softball team the entire time she has been at KO, reliable and dependable to always give us her 110%."

Senior first baseman and pitcher Co-captain Kyra Dunnirvine loves having Williams on the team and being able to play with her every day. "Williams is such a huge asset to the team and always brings energy to the field, and I will miss her greatly next year," she said.

Sophomore catcher Olivia Gallup agrees with Dunnirvine and thinks that Williams has such a positive impact on the team. "As one of the team captains, Hailey

pushes us to be our best selves, whether it be during a pregame speech, picking us up after a bad inning, or getting us hype both at the game and on the bus rides," Gallup said. "She brings so much energy to our games and practices and it definitely makes a difference. She's the life of the party!"

Next year, Williams will be headed to Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, Pa. to play Division II softball for the Griffins womens softball team and is beyond thrilled to continue her softball career in college. "I can't wait to bring my energy and enthusiasm to a new team where I can make friendships that I can cherish forever," she said. "I know playing softball in college will be more than I could have ever imagined. It will be an adjustment at first, but I know this will be the most exciting four years of my life. With all of the constant traveling and practices, I know the love I have for the game will carry me through it all."

Williams owes lots of thanks to her family for their constant support. "I've had endless support from my family for years, and I couldn't have done it without them," she said. Williams' enthusiasm and dedication to the girls varsity softball team is always shown through her performance in practices and games. While the team will miss her greatly, we wish her the best of luck as she continues her softball career at Chestnut Hill

College for the next four years!

Mac Louis

Wrapping up his final season of KO baseball, senior outfielder Co-captain Mac Louis has solidified his position as one of the key contributors to the team.

Louis started playing baseball at a young age. He immersed himself in the sport in different ways, including reading various books about baseball and going to Red Sox games with his dad. Growing up, he idolized former Red Sox second baseman Dustin Pedroia. "I always just wanted to be like Dustin Pedroia," he said. "He was a big inspiration for me."

Assistant Coach Ryan Radmonovich noted Louis's work ethic. "He leads by example, which is great," he said. "He's always hustling." He also noted how Louis brings energy and demand to practice every day. "He comes every day with great energy, always working hard and trying to get better," Coach Radmonovich said, "and he expects a lot from the team which makes him a great leader." Coach Rad also highlighted Louis's hitting. "He bunts the ball well," he said. Currently, Louis bats an average of .294, on the brink of .300.

Louis talked about how keeping your head up in a challenging sport like baseball is important. "Baseball's a very mentally challenging sport," he

said. "Keeping your head up, coming together with your teammates, being able to stay in it, and have fun playing baseball is important because it can be hard to enjoy it. Sometimes it's a real struggle, especially at the plate or in the field. The biggest challenge to overcome is getting down on yourself, and always remember to have fun."

Some highlights from Louis's career include the game against Avon Old Farms on April 12, where he helped the team beat AOF for the first time in several years. The team made a comeback in the last inning and scored five runs to secure the win with a score of 10-6. "The team came together, and it was great to be a part of that," Louis said.

Coach Rad noted another one of Louis's highlights during one of the first home games, when Louis fell over the fence to catch a ball and made the catch, resulting in a robbery and the third out for the inning.

Louis plans to continue to play club baseball while attending Connecticut College. He also looks forward to cheering on his teammates, such as senior pitcher Co-captain Devin Wolff who will be playing at UConn. "It'll be fun to stay in touch with my teammates and go watch and support them," he said.

Overall, the future looks bright for Louis and we wish him the best of luck in college and baseball!

Boys lacrosse battles through long season

by Jacob Mapp '24

The varsity boys lacrosse team finished off the season with a final record of 2-9 for the 2023 spring season. Though these results may not show the most ideal season, the team stayed strong and played some fine lacrosse throughout the season.

After an 0-2 start to the season, the team got their first win on April 15, against Forman School. The team won 10-1. The defense for the Wyverns was strong. Sophomore Steve Bailey scored three goals this game along with sophomore midfielder Jack Neikrie who scored two goals and collected two assists. Freshman

midfielder Dalton Smith contributed with a perfect 14 for 14 on face-offs. Overall, the first win of the season was a true team



Stephen Bailey '25 races past a defender. Photo by Matthew Belo.

victory for the boys lacrosse team.

Face-offs were a massive strength for the team that Assistant Coach David Hild highlighted. "We did well with face offs, and I think we got better defensively as the year went on," he said. Coach Hild talked about the efforts that Smith has put in throughout the season. "One of our freshmen, Dalton Smith, was a great face off man for us," Coach Hild said. "He was a huge addition to the team this year and we're very pleased we'll have him back again for three more years." Coach Hild was also quick to mention the great leadership provided by junior midfielder Co-captain Michael Bzowycyk and junior

defender Co-captain Alex Levin.

The team would struggle throughout the rest of the season, only collecting one other win against Wooster School, with a final score of 11-4. Seniors defender Jake Amburn and midfield/attack Josh Zukowski each scored two goals this game. Coach Hild believes much of the team's struggles came from a lack of production on offense. "We struggled on offense and we struggled to score a lot of goals," he said. "Part of that comes from being a little bit young and not being great at understanding some offensive concepts and relationships to each other."

Despite this, Coach Hild believes that the team played

some of their best lacrosse in losing efforts. "In games against Greenwich Country Day, Suffield Academy, Cheshire Academy, and King School, we played some really good lacrosse, but we had a hard time sustaining it for a full game," Coach Hild said. "Suffield is a great example where they were a significantly bigger and older team and we were either up or down by a goal at halftime. And we just ran out of gas. Candidly, the best lacrosse we played was in games that we ended up losing."

It was a long season for the team, but they managed to stay strong and battle in each and every game. Good luck to the seniors as they head off to college in the fall!

Softball defeats Loomis to win Founders

By Keira Sullivan '23

After an intense 5-4 win over Loomis Chaffee on May 15, KO's softball team was crowned Founders League champions. Post-win celebrations included ringing the victory bell once they returned to campus and reflecting on the truly incredible season they've had this year; a fact that is only made more apparent by their impressive 10-3 record.

Although the accomplishment of being Founders League champions and third ranked team in New England is a source of pride for many of the team's members who devote hours each day to honing their skills, it is also a signal that the end is near. To conclude the season, the Wyverns competed in the WNEPSSA semifinals on Sunday, May 21, against the #2 ranked Cushing Academy away at Cushing. KO unfortunately lost 1-0 to the Penguins.

Reflecting on her time with the softball team, senior first baseman and pitcher Co-captain Kyra Dunnirvine shared how being a member of the varsity team for six years has enabled her to grow as an athlete and leader.

"Throughout the years, I've been able to see different leaders on the team and see how their strategies impacted the team for better or worse," she said candidly. "Now that I'm a captain myself, this is so valuable because I've been able to use years of watching other leaders to determine how to handle different situations."

Beyond lessons in leadership, Dunnirvine added that her experience with the softball team brought her close to people she otherwise wouldn't have had the opportunity to play with, like students in the Middle School. She hopes that even after she has graduated, she will stay in touch with former teammates and friends.

While recounting her fondest memories of being on the team, Dunnirvine added that an 11-inning, 1-0 win over Westminster earlier in the season was one of her happiest moments. The team demonstrated serious grit and determination throughout the showdown, keeping their opponents from scoring runs and staying in the game long enough to come out on top. Dunnirvine cited the efforts of eighth-grade pitcher Alexis Nisyrios and senior short-stop and pitcher Co-captain Hailey Williams on the mound as being crucial components in their success.

Looking back on the season as a whole, Dunnirvine explained that the team's schedule worked out in such a way that the level of competition grew as the season progressed, enabling the team to work out hiccups as they arose. "It allowed us to figure things out gradually," she said. "We were able to get people into positions that gave everyone opportunities to play, but also gave us the best chance to succeed. This schedule also helped newer players get acclimated to the team."

Nisyrios is one of the players who is new to the team. Even



Senior pitcher Kyra Dunnirvine throws a fastball in a home game against Ethel Walker. Photo by Matthew Belo '26.

though she is an eighth-grader, her performances on the mound and field belie her age. The formidable skills she demonstrates during games are very much the result of her experiences in club softball which she has been playing since she was seven. Currently, she plays for the Rhode Island Thunder 14u National team, one of New England's premier programs. Nisyrios is very committed to the sport and dedicates much of her time to getting better. "Practices on the weekends are typically four hours long," she shared. "We travel a lot over the fall and summer throughout the Northeast but also to other parts of the country."

Not only is Nisyrios already an impact player for Wyvern softball, but she's also become close friends with many of the girls on the team, despite the age gap. This cohesion is the result of the team's emphasis on developing team chemistry, which they work on both on and off the field.

Nisyrios explained that bus rides to and from games are times when some of the best team bonding takes place. "During our bus rides, we bring energy for our games," she said. "We do each other's hair and eye black and on the rides home, we jam out to music and have such a blast."

Several softball athletes

were honored with awards at the Spring Sports Assembly on Friday, May 19. Dunnirvine received the Six Year Award, Williams won the Four Year Award, and Brunalli received the Four Year Award.

Clearly, KO softball has had a season to be incredibly proud of and many happy memories to look back on. We wish all of the graduating seniors all the best as they move on to the next chapter of their lives and know that the legacy they leave behind will set KO softball teams up for success for seasons to come. It is undeniable that this team's future is bright and we can't wait to see all they'll accomplish next year and beyond.

Track and field has record-breaking season

By Ishaan Bafna '26

The KO track and field team has continued their early season success throughout the last month. The team competed in multiple meets so far but the main focus has been the improvement of athletes in all areas.

Track and field consists of 17 events including running various distances, jumping, and throwing. Thus, a variety of skilled athletes are necessary for a successful team and season.

"All events in track and field, whether that is running, jumping or throwing, are taken into account on how well we do as a team," Head Coach Tricia Watson said. "It really is a team effort. We need athletes for all events to be competitive."

Unfortunately, some of the team's meets have been canceled due to bad weather while another meet was also an inter-squad meet for the boys after another team pulled out.

However, the team did get opportunities to show their improvement in the meets they competed in. One meet was a long standing competition against Suffield Academy and Pomfret on April 26.

The teams had good 4x100 meter relays on both the boys and girls sides. Freshman Tyler Brown broke into 20 feet on the long jump. Sophomore Christian Gordon ran



The girls 4x4 team poses with Coach Baker. Photo courtesy of Coach Kraus.

two sub 55 second 400s in the 400 and the 4x400 relay. Another really strong meet for both sides was at Hopkins on May 10. The boys placed first and the girls placed second out of five teams.

The team has improved throughout the season and made great strides. Practices got increasingly harder as the season progressed. "As the season develops and the kids get more in shape, the workouts get harder," Assistant Coach David Baker said.

Coach Baker typically works with the long and mid-distance runners. "They get harder in terms of the distance they are being asked to run or how many times they have to run," he said.

Workouts continue to increase in difficulty until cham-

pionship season. "Once we get to championships we start to taper," senior Co-captain Aidan Ladewig said. "We want everyone to be healthy during championship time."

One of the many notable things in practice is the development and improvement of freshmen and sophomores as they continue to take on major roles of leadership in the next few years.

"There's a really great freshmen culture in working hard and improving and then seeing that work pay off in results," Coach Baker said. "They come into hard workouts seeing some progress and growth and it is really cool to have this younger talent."

There have also been many notable individual performances during the season. "Christian has

been phenomenal in his racing, and he has not missed a single practice all season," Coach Watson said.

Sophomore Claire Palmer has also been racing very well. Palmer ran a personal best of 10 minutes and 40 seconds in the 3000 meter dash and also ran 5:04 in the 1500.

She additionally has been instrumental for the team. She came in first at Founders in the 1500. Also, she recently broke two records for KO, namely the 800 record from 1984 with a time of 2:23 and the 3000 from 2007 by recording another person best in the 3000 with a time of. Furthermore, after her spectacular win in the 1500, she was named Founders League Champion.

Brown especially has been good with his long jumping and sprints. "Tyler, who as a freshman, is competing against juniors and seniors in meets," Coach Baker said. "That is really exciting to see."

Another standout performance was from Brown, senior Chase Fountain, sophomore Joey Kalinowski, and sophomore Sandy Cloud.

The team had a strong performance in the 4x100 relay, breaking another record from 1984 with a time of 43 seconds. That time helped them come in third at Founders.

During New England's at Marianapolis on May 20, many

athletes had standout performances. Palmer came in first for both the 3000 with a time of 10:36 and 1500 with a time of 4:50. The girls 4x4 team consisting of senior Co-captain Jordan DiMauro, freshmen Ella Golino, Palmer, and junior Pauline Golder, came in third with a time of 4:27. DiMauro also came in third for the 300 hurdles with a time of 49.9 seconds.

Brown came in first for the 200 running a time of 23.58 seconds and third in the long jump with a jump of 19 ft and 7 inches. The boys 4x1 team came in third running 45.62 seconds.

All of these record breaking performances are due to the dedication of the track and field athletes and strong and dedicated coaching from Coach Baker, Coach Watson, Coach Alex Kraus, Coach Fritz Goodman, and many others behind the scenes.

The team has found ways to push one another throughout their season. "The team is very supportive and fun," junior Ava Leshem said. "I love the team dynamic since everyone pushes everyone to their max." This high level of competition has made all the difference.

The track and field season concluded with many improvements and strong performances. We hope their success continues next year and we say goodbye to the senior captains and leaders.

KO baseball reaches the playoffs

by Jacob Mapp '24

The KO varsity baseball team finished the regular season with an impressive record of 11-6 making it to the Founders League semifinals, but ultimately losing to Loomis Chaffee.

The Wyverns have been solid for the entire season. Assistant Coach Ryan Radmanovich talked about some of the major contributors to the team. "Our main starting pitchers are [senior Co-captain] Devin Wolf, and [junior] Adam Merritt," Coach Radmanovich said.

Assistant Coach Peter Jones was quick to mention the play of junior catcher Nate Bowes. "Bowes came in with a lot of experience and has done quite well," Coach Jones said. "He's the most impactful new player."

Senior outfielder Co-captain Mac Louis talked more about how the team has come together as a whole. "I've honestly got to say as a team, not one person truly stands out," he said. "When



Elijah Wells '24 pitching during a varsity baseball game. Photo by Matthew Belo.

we do play really good team ball, we're the best team in the league. It's hard to beat us when we're all clicking together."

The team has racked up some immaculate wins against strong Founders League opponents in Avon Old Farms, Choate Rosemary Hall, and Loomis Chaffee. Entering the final game of the regular season, the team had faced three straight losses. Two of

these losses saw the Wyverns get overpowered by an overwhelming offensive attack and the other loss was a closely contested 3-2 loss to Choate Rosemary Hall. The team was looking to make a statement and boost their confidence before the playoffs began.

The final game of the season was held on Wednesday, May 17, at home on Senior Day against the perennially strong Westminster School. The team had faced Westminster earlier in the season but was unable to secure the victory. This Senior Day contest would be vital for the Wyverns and their push for a championship. Merritt took the mound and worked five innings, pitching the shutout. Bowes racked up two hits that afternoon, keeping the Wyvern offense moving. Late in the game, Wolff would score Louis on a sacrifice fly to center field, giving the team the lead 1-0. Sophomore infielder Dom Trolio came in relief to slam the door on Westminster. This defensive battle on Senior

Day was won by the Wyverns, and Merritt added another win to his already impressive season record. This was a massive victory for the Wyverns which catapulted them to the postseason.

Coach Radmanovich is aiming high and looking to fulfill the team's goal from the beginning of the season, but he knows the task at hand is much easier said than done. "This year we were looking to win a championship, The Founders League Championship, and that's the goal and that was the goal going into spring training this year when we took the team to Florida," he said. "Our goal from day one is to win the Founder's League Championship and we've put ourselves in a good position right now, but it's going to be tough."

With the success they found in the regular season, the team headed into the Founders League semifinals facing a tough opponent in Loomis Chaffee. The team fell 10-6, but showed grit and determi-

"When we do play really good team ball, we're the best team in the league. It's hard to beat us when we're all clicking together."

—Mac Louis

nation until the end. Congratulations to the varsity baseball team on a strong season and we wish the seniors the best of luck in the future.

Girls lacrosse stays strong throughout the season

by Jordan Dimauro '23

The KO girls varsity lacrosse team has battled through a tough season against some difficult competition, going into their final stretch of games with a 1-14 record.

Despite facing very strong varsity programs, the girls put up a fight all season and never gave up.

Head Coach Judy Bailey reflected on the growth, particularly defensively, that the team has shown throughout the season.

"As a team we have improved in many ways," she said. "Defensively we have improved in how we play together as a unit, helping when needed and pressuring the ball. The defense especially has done a nice job using their back up and changing fields to get the ball to the midfield and beyond."

Senior attacker Co-captain



Eight-grader Molly Wiggenhauser catches the ball in a game against The Pomfret School. Photo by Matthew Belo.

strong bond with one another, which has translated to success on the field. "We have grown to possess more of a personal team connection which has helped us on the field as a team," she said.

On Wednesday, May 3, the girls traveled to face Hamden Hall, and although they did not win, they played a strong game. With a final score of 14-12, Coach Bailey noted that the girls stayed in the game. "We were competitive from the opening draw to the final horn," she said.

The Wyverns had another strong performance against Ethel Walker School on Thursday, May 11. Despite falling just short with a final score of 15-12, the team had a number of different goal-scorers and put up a fight until the end.

Junior midfielder Co-captain Kami Tarantino led the team with five goals and two assists, which helped keep the game competitive.

Reflecting back on the season, Coach Bailey talked about how the team has had standout performances from a number of players, which balanced the team out well.

"Throughout the season, we have had several players step up in different games," she said.

Coach Bailey highlighted how important Tarantino and Kotowitz have been in the team's success this season, noting both their leadership and skill on the field. "Alle Kotowitz and Kami Tarantino led the way for us in scoring," she said. "Both girls have scored 28 goals each in the 13 games we have played to date."

In the net, eighth-grade goalie Sarah Balog had a strong season, and she was mentored by senior Co-captain Chayse Shamleffer.

"Sarah had the support of Chayse Shamleffer who coached her every day in prac-

tice and games sharing her experience and expertise in the position," Coach Bailey said.

During the Spring Sports Assembly on Friday, May 19, several players on the team were honored with various awards for their commitment, high level of play, and passion.

Kotowitz and Shamleffer won the 4 Year Award showcasing their commitment to the sport at a high level.

Kotowitz also received the Most Valuable Player award for her tremendous effort and leadership throughout the season.

Tarantino received the Coaches Award honoring her love of the sport and strong presence on the field.

Junior Ashley Neikre won the Most Improved Player award as a result of the key role she played on the team this year as her first year on Varsity.

"As a team we have improved in many ways. Defensively we have improved in how we play together as a unit, helping when needed and pressuring the ball. The defense especially has done a nice job using their back up and changing fields to get the ball to the midfield and beyond."

—Coach Bailey

Despite facing some tough competition this season, the girls varsity lacrosse team displayed tremendous growth and perseverance. We wish the seniors the best of luck!

"We have grown to possess more of a personal team connection which has helped us on the field as a team."

—Alle Kotowitz

Alle Kotowitz echoed Coach Bailey's statements about the improvement in the team's defense.

"Our defense specifically has improved, with more communication and feeling comfortable around each other," she said.

Kotowitz also noted that over the course of the season, the team has grown to have a

Girls tennis wins most matches in Founders

by Emma Barringer '24

The girls varsity tennis team has continued their strong season with an overall record of 16-3, including post-season matches. This record not only shows the team's strength and high level of competition, but this record is the highest ever achieved for the girls varsity tennis program at KO.

Wrapping up their stellar season, the girls qualified for the playoffs. The team was the third seed in the tournament and beat Westminster School 5-3.

Next, the team faced Windsor School and was unfortunately defeated 0-5. However, the girls still have had a successful season.

Currently, the team has the most wins in the Founders League. All of this success is due to the intense playing of their highly skilled seniors and the experienced coaching from Head Coach Ronald Garcia.

Several players are especially proud of the strides the team has made in achieving their goals, including junior Hannah Malkin. "This season went by so fast, with the playoffs coming up fast," she said. "The team has held a strong record of 15-2, and is working towards improving our record and finishing the season strong."

Under strong leader-

ship from Coach Garcia, the team has developed both mental and physical toughness. This strength has allowed the team to win a majority of their matches.

"We wanted to win 80% of our matches, was the number I threw out there," Coach Garcia said. "We've done that, we've exceeded where I thought we'd be. So, we're doing better than I expected, which is rare."

One impressive win the girls

had in their season was against Taft School. Senior Co-captain Stella Dodd won in both #1 singles and #1 doubles matches. Freshman Alex Doering was the true hero of the tournament. Despite an ankle injury, she won her match to lead them to a decisive victory.

The girls also showcased their strong playing against Williston Northampton. New players were also able to play, including sophomore Izzy Mende-

loveci, sophomore Raine Wang, and junior Aashni Patel contributed to the stellar Wyvern win.

Seniors Co-captain Hallie Braunstein, Christina Mullen, Dodd, and Abby Baier have made a significant impact on the team this year. "We have four seniors that are in our top six," Coach Garcia said. "They've all really improved their overall performance a lot."

Dodd and Braunstein have led their team through the season

with poise and dedication. Their excellent leadership has enabled the team to solve many of the challenges that faced the team at the beginning of the season. "One challenge we had was in the beginning of our season when we were trying to figure out the best doubles pairings," Dodd said. "It took the first few matches to figure out the best doubles teams."

As the team wraps up its season, several players have been honored for their skills, positive mental attitude, and impact on the team. All seniors earned the Four Year award, showcasing their commitment to the program and high skill level.

Additionally, freshman Doering won the Most Improved Player award for her continuous dedication and resilience when playing against tough competitors. Junior Loretta Szych, a new player this year who has made a substantial impact on the girls varsity tennis program, won the Coaches Award. Lastly, Dodd won the Most Valuable Player award for her high skill level and leadership on the team.

Although the girls' season is over, their high level of playing and their impressive record sets them apart from other past tennis teams. We wish the girls varsity tennis team good luck ahead.



The dominating 2023 girls varsity tennis team poses for a team shot. Photo by KO Communications and Marketing.

KO golf dominates the fairways Boys tennis finds success

by Jacob Mapp '24

The KO varsity golf team has been making waves on the green, showcasing their unwavering dedication, exceptional talent, and commendable teamwork.

Head Coach Michael Wolf provided a glimpse into the team's outstanding performance thus far, including remarkable achievements and areas for improvement. "The strength in our team comes from ball striking, and our high level of competition," Coach Wolf said. "I feel like we are a competitive team, with kids who have drive and work ethic and a desire to win."

On Wednesday, May 3, the team traveled to Quinnetis Country Club to face off against Pomfret School where the players delivered their best scores of the season. Senior Captain Cody Brew set a remarkable personal best of 32 for nine holes. Freshman Austin Perkins also stood out, shooting an impressive 37, while sophomore Alex Braunstein and junior Ty Russo showcased their skills with season-best scores of 39.

Sophomore Stryckland Ligon also contributed with an outstanding match score of 41, resulting in the team's season-low score of 188. The team then went on to play in the Coppola Cup hosted by Avon Old Farms where they finished in second place over Loomis Chaffee and Suffield Academy, two exceptionally strong competitors.

Next, the team competed in the Western New England

where they competed against 16 teams with some of the best golfers in the region. The team overall finished in ninth place.

Perkins, however, finished first place individually. Perkins medaled out of 95 golfers, with a score of -4 under 68. Coach Wolf briefly spoke about how delighted he was to see the success of Perkins at such a young age. "I am super impressed and very proud of Austin," he said.

Perkins has been an exceptional player for the team this season, leading with a remarkable season scoring average of 36.75 for nine holes and 36.45 for matches. Perkins has also earned the title of medalist in four rounds. Other team standouts are Brew who is right behind Perkins with an impressive season scoring average of 37.52 for nine holes and 38.15 for matches. Brew has also achieved four medalist rounds.

While Coach Wolf emphasized that the team's strength lies in

their exceptional ball striking and competitive spirit, he acknowledged the need for improvement in order to perform better in more competitive tournaments. "Where we struggle is in our ability to chip and putt, which is extremely important to scoring low rounds," he said. "At times we could be better at course management, which are the decisions we make, in our shot placements and club selections."

The team has set some ambitious goals for the remainder of the season.

They aim to finish strong in their last two regular-season matches and strive for impressive placements in both the Founders Tournament and the 48th annual KIT Golf Tournament, which they will be hosting at the Gillette Ridge Golf Club. Winning the KIT tournament, known as the Prep School Championships, is a particular target for the team. Good luck to the varsity golf team in the season ahead.



KO golf team picture. Photo courtesy of Marketing and Communications.

by Alyssa Tousignant '25

With a record of 4-10, the boys varsity tennis team has faced some tough competition this season. However, the team has continued to work hard and improve their skills, showing a true commitment to the sport.

At the start of the season, the team set several objectives for themselves, including improving their skills over time, putting in the effort during practices and games, displaying good sportsmanship, and winning the matches they were capable of winning.

The team has done well in meeting these goals, specifically with winning the matches that were within their power to win. "We had two matches that were both winnable and reasonable, and although they were very close, we managed to win one against Cheshire, while unfortunately losing the other against Kent," Head Coach Andrew Krugman said. "In the other matches, I believe we were clearly the stronger team, so a loss in any of those would have been disappointing. However, we also faced several opponents who proved to be too deep and too strong for us this year."

In addition to winning the closely matched game against Cheshire, the team has seen success in the individual performances of their players.

During Spring Sports Day, senior Captain Will Jacobs, who played the number 3 position, had an extremely close match.

"It was truly a marathon match with very long points," Coach Krugman said. "However, Jacobs ultimately won 10-7 and his game won us the match." That same day, freshmen Pratt Blair and Ciaran Concepcion came from behind and won their matches 9-7.

Several other factors have contributed to the team's success this season. However, their biggest strength, which is also their weakness, is their youth. With only two seniors on the team, the underclassmen have the opportunity to develop their skills and grow alongside the team. However, this also means that the team has less experience.

Nevertheless, the younger players have stepped up and shown a lot of promise for the future, improving their skills throughout the season and demonstrating a strong work ethic.

The team has also had successes in various prizes. This year, southern New England coaches voted Jacobs as the recipient of the sportsmanship award. Jacobs additionally won the Most Valuable Player award and the Four Year Award. Freshman Pratt Blair won the Most Improved Player award. Lastly, Freshman Ciaran Concepción was awarded the Coaches Award.

Overall, the varsity boys tennis team has a very solid 2023 spring season and is looking to improve next year. Congratulations to the entire boys varsity tennis team and good luck to the seniors as they move to the next level!