

# THE ROUNDUP

BY AND FOR THE STUDENTS OF HALF HOLLOW HILLS HIGH SCHOOL WEST

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# Two HSW Clubs Teach Real-World Skills

By Julia Jassey / Political Writer

It's the gripe of every student the world over: When am I ever going to really use this?

Hour after painstaking hour is spent slaving over textbooks, committing facts and equations to memory. But how much of it will actually mean something in ten years' time? More importantly, will we truly learn how to "adult" before we leave high school and enter the all-too-intimidating "real world"?

Hills West has seen your quandary and raises you two new clubs: Life Skills and Food and Nutrition. These two new additions to West's extra-curricular repertoire are providing the student body with an opportunity to explore the realities that they'll face after finally donning the cap and gown.

With the dreaded threat of the Freshman Fifteen looming ominously over every senior's shoulders, the Life Skills club has been well received. Accordingly, there's a sad reality that we all must face when we venture into the uncharted territory of adulthood: Nutella isn't a food group. If this comes as a shock, I strongly implore you to consider paying a visit to the Life Skills club (and a dietician, at that). When the High School days of manipulating qua-

dratic equations and contemplating the War of 1812 come to a close, there are some instrumental skills we will need on hand that aren't cultivated in the classroom. The Life Skills club, as it's name would imply, provides the perfect opportunity to prepare for the challenges that come in the future. Mrs.

Bauchler, the club's advisor, teaches students about teamwork, fitness, and cooking

(because we

all need to know how to do more than make

a bowl of cereal).

This invalu-

able club takes place

2:15 on Thursdays in room 219

at Hills East, and it provides the ideal atmosphere to meet new people and learn some fundamental "adulting" skills.

Meanwhile, there is another undeniable reality for us to face: There is perhaps nothing a high schooler likes more than food. Enter the Food and Nutrition club. What began as an after-school program designed to provide special

education students with an activity after class, has now turned into a club for all students to do what we love most: eat. The club has grown from having fifteen students last year, and it is now twenty-five students strong. It has facilitated a connection with West's

special needs population by creating a forum for Peer Learning.

The club's administrator,

Mrs. Hart,

impresses upon the profound impact

that this has on both the

special and general education students.

As a certified special education teacher,

she spoke to the pertinence of the club. "A lot of general ed. students

also need to understand that special ed. students are just another student," she said. "And, if you

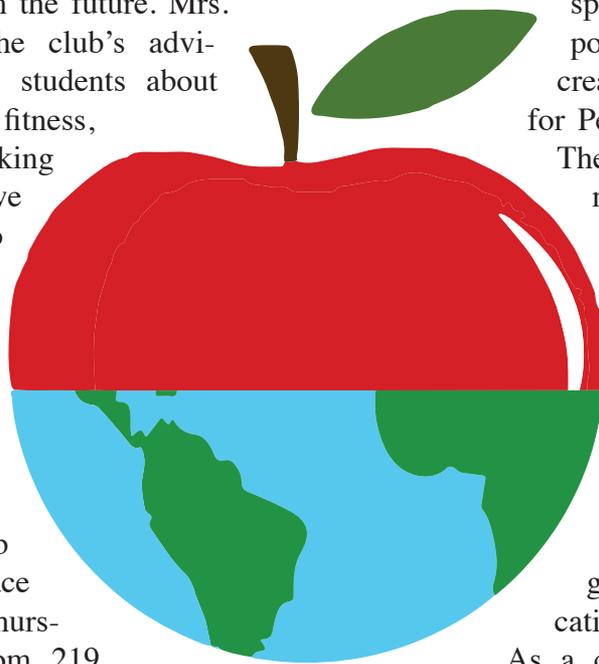
don't see that every day, if you don't realize that, then it makes

other students feel like they're not really a part of the school."

If the promise of great

food and even better friends isn't enticing enough, Mrs. Hart explained that establishing the Food and Nutrition club as a means of obtaining extra credit is currently under works, making it a win-win for anybody involved. The Food and Nutrition club meets every other Friday at High School West in Mrs. Hart's room, and it is the perfect atmosphere for new people to meet and delicious food to be eaten.

The addition of the Food and Nutrition as well as the Life Skills club speak to more than just our school district's diverse field of interests. These practical clubs provide the student body with new opportunity to explore the actuality of adulthood. As much as we may joke about "adulting," there is a growing concern that our so called "sheltered" generation may not be capable of coping with the struggles of living on our own. Programs like the aforementioned two clubs are doing a great deal to combat that sentiment, and they are essential to the foundation upon which we will all build our futures. So, before scheduling your next night full of Netflix binge-watching, consider the Food and Nutrition or Life Skills club. Orange is the New Black will still be there when you get home. I promise.



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HIGH SCHOOL WEST

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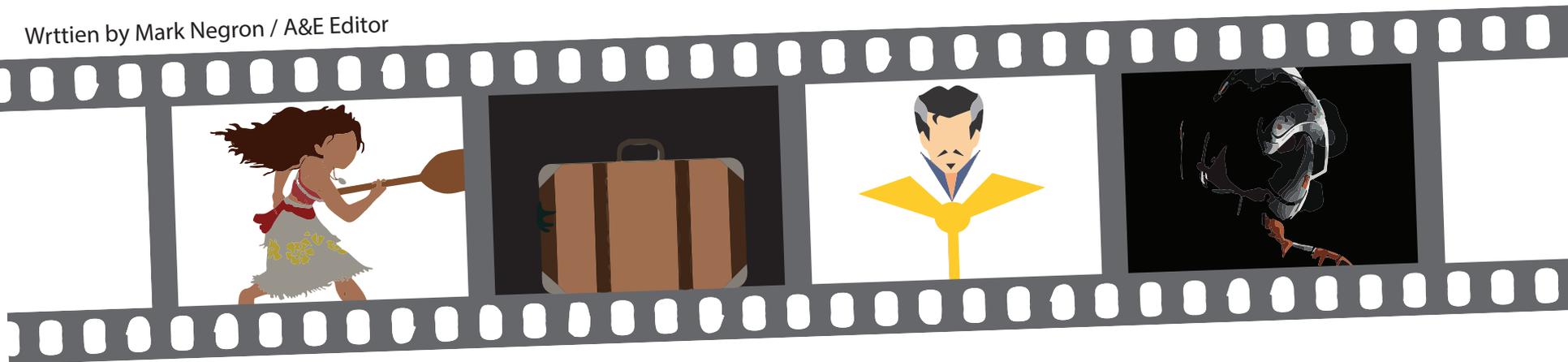


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# Autumn Movies of 2016

## What to Be Excited For

Written by Mark Negron / A&E Editor



The autumn breeze has finally begun blowing, carrying along with it a lot of movies that are worth discussing. With Thanksgiving barely a week away, let's talk about the films who have the greatest chance of bringing the gravy to the dinner table.

First up is the screen debut of Marvel's newest character in their Marvel Cinematic Universe: Marvel Studio's Doctor Strange, which hit theaters November 4th. With critics having already seen the movie and reviews released, we can come to the conclusion that Marvel has introduced another great character. One critic, Peter Travers from Rolling Stone, wrote "What Robert Downey, Jr. is to Iron Man and Ryan Reynolds is to Deadpool – that's what Benedict Cumberbatch is to Doctor Strange." He continues to write that the film is "a kaleidoscope of melting images." Reviews aside, this film seems to be extremely interesting, introducing powers and special effects to the likes of which we've never seen before in a Marvel movies. Lately, Marvel's origin stories for heroes have been some of the best yet, with last year bringing quite a small hero to quite a big screen with Ant-Man, and the year before that, Guardians of the Galaxy stole our hearts as Starlord, Groot and co. saved the galaxy. This film looks to be no different, with the introduc-

tion of the arrogant Doctor Steven Strange to the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Students and fans of the MCU, including students like sophomore and Marvel superfan Gina Liotta, are bursting at the seams over Benedict Cumberbatch joining the Marvel family. "I hope to see it as soon as possible," said Liotta. "I'm so excited!" When asked what she's most excited for, she responded, "I'm excited to see how magic is introduced in the MCU. We've never really seen real magic be used other than with Scarlet Witch in the Avengers movies." That's a very good point to note, by the way. Doctor Strange will be the first Marvel film to introduce and explore the idea of magic. In fact, it's one of the main reasons most MCU fans are excited for the picture. And by looking at the effects in the trailers released, it's not hard to see why Doctor Strange looks to be quite the spell-binding adventure.

Another magical adventure soon to be released is the long-anticipated Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them. In this whimsical feature film, join Eddie Redmayne as Newt Scamander, an eccentric wizard with an equally eccentric collection of creatures, as a new wizardly war begins in this prequel to the Harry Potter series. J. K. Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter and Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them novels, as well as screenwriter

for Fantastic Beasts film, has stated that this is the beginning of a five-film series, and if the trailers should say anything about the film, the journey should prove to be quite exciting. "I thought they were done making Harry Potter films, but this is a welcome surprise," said Ankit Nagpal. Get excited for this reentrance to the wizarding world, as Fantastic Beasts opens in theaters November 17th.

The next film to hit the fall movies list is Disney's Moana. With an animation style reminiscent of Frozen or Zootopia, this Polynesian adventure centers around the titular character Moana, a daring teenager with a special bond to the ocean around her. Following Moana on her adventure is Maui, a shape-shifting demigod whose stories and legends have been told for generations. Throughout the feature, both characters sail the open ocean in a search for adventure, ancestry and -- most importantly -- identity. This particular Disney picture has been hyped up for a while now as another addition of the Disney princess lineup that breaks free from the mold of the older Disney princesses, as signs of romance are notably absent, and the thought of our titular heroine becoming a "damsel in distress" seems far from likely. "I'm so happy to see more movies break free from the 'save the girl' story line," said Senior Julia Nomborg. "There's not enough time for girls to show their strength in Disney pictures." Get excited to see a dazzling animated adventure in Moana, to be released in theaters November 23rd.

Two words: Star Wars. What's not to like about the space adventure? One of the series' greatest strengths is how it makes the audience feel as if there's a larger galaxy than the planets we see the protagonists in any given entry in the series walk on. One of the greatest examples of this is to be shown in Rogue One: A Star Wars Story. Taking place before Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope, Rogue One: A Star Wars Story focuses on a ragtag group of rebels, including Jyn Erso, played by Felicity Jones, and Saw Gerrera, played by Forest Whitaker, banding together to steal plans for the mighty Death Star. Being the first spin-off that Disney releases, with upcoming films centering around Han Solo and Boba Fett, this film is a pioneer in the Star Wars universe, and hopes to show more of the grounded reality and grit that the original trilogy didn't show due to all the whimsy of the Force and lightsaber. The sci-fi war film also features the return of one of the best villains of all time: Darth Vader. With that being said, get excited.

With all of these hyped-up movies coming out soon, we should all be excited to see how these films play out as the 2016 year draws to a close. Check out the reviews of the individual movies listed after release at [www.hillsroundup.com](http://www.hillsroundup.com) to see if the hype was worth it.

# Who We

By Samantha Lange / Political Editor

Both High School West students and the United States, as a whole, have weighed in on who should be the winner of the 2016 election. Whereas High School West students put their vote towards Hillary Clinton, the nation's unexpected choice was Donald Trump, who, against all odds, won the presidency.

For the past couple of elections, High School West has engaged in presidential mock elections from Youth Initiative Leadership, organized by Ms. Mills. Over the years, Hills West's voting results have proven to be indicative of the nation's voting results as well. For example, in the 2004 election, Hills West voted that George W. Bush would win, despite the trend for students to vote increasingly democratic, and he did, by a close margin of 50.7% to 48.3%. This trend continued for the next two presidential election cycles, where the school's polls foreshadowed a win for Barack Obama in both the 2008 election, with 52.9%, and the 2012 election, with 51%.

However, the 2016 election has been a different story entirely. Trump won the national election. It is the first time in three cycles that this survey has yielded results on a national and school level that have varied from the actual national election results. The question is how this could be and the answer is that many of the voters, both of Hills West and of the country, were unsure who they were going to vote for going into the election.

According to Ms. Mills, an indication of this unsureness can be detected in the votes of this cycle being abnormally "skewed." Despite the fact that Hillary won the country on the survey 51% to 31% and the school by 44.33% to 42.40%, that very same survey

shows Hillary losing the solid blue state of New York by 4%. This, if anything, is proof that the results were so skewed that perhaps the Youth Initiative Leadership survey didn't work this year because people simply didn't know who to vote for and based it off of passing whims or peer pressure.

The Roundup's mock election, like the Youth Initiative Leadership's mock election, was expected to match the national results just as well as the other poll. Surprisingly, unlike the Youth Initiative Leadership survey, The Roundup's results succeeded in correlating with the nation's results, voting Trump 48.3% to 42%. The Roundup results directly contradicted the more established Youth Initiative Leadership results. Even though this survey more accurately matched the national results, whether this survey more accurately captured the views of the school or not is the true question. Perhaps, due to the fact that the Youth Initiative Leadership's mock election was more strictly required of students to complete than the The Roundup's, approximately only 50% of the student body voted on The Roundup's mock election.

Although there are a plethora of factors that could have influenced both the nationwide and schoolwide elections, through both the Youth Initiative Leadership and The Roundup, results, it would be impossible to successfully identify each and every one. Fortunately, most of the similarities and differences can be summed up in one important, albeit broad, factor: demographics.

Compared to the country as a whole, High School West is more diverse in its voter base and minorities are always more likely to vote Democrat. According to Pew Research Center, the projected voting demographics in the general election of the 2016 election consists

of 69% white people, 12% black people, 12% Hispanic people, and 4% Asian people. However, according to data.nysed.gov, the Hills West's voting demographics consists of only 64.5% white people, 13.9% black people, 6.2% Hispanic people, and 13.1% Asian people.

The significance behind these demographics lies in the prevalent voting trends that different ethnicities have proven to maintain each year. For example, according to a survey from the 2000 Center of Political Studies at the University of Michigan, African-Americans tend to identify with conservative social values but vote Democrat due to their liberal economic views.

There is a larger percentage of African-American students in High School West than in the country as a whole. Additionally, religion is also a huge factor. The Jewish population is generalized to vote Democrat and the Protestant population is generalized to vote Republican. Being that, according to Pew Research Center, 45.6% of voters in America

are Protestant, as opposed to a mere 8% of Suffolk County identifying as Protestant in the 2010 US Census, so it is safe to assume that



Illustrated by Vanessa Krimper

# on West?

religious differences are a major contributor to the variations in the votes between Suffolk County and the United States, which is a large-

ly Protestant country. Additionally, 1.9% of the country identify as Jewish as opposed to 7% of Suffolk County in the 2010 US Consensus.

These statistics are too drastic to ignore.

Although these trends can be useful while giving rough predictions on how certain groups or ethnicities will vote, it should be noted that voting trends are essentially generalizations and largely subject to flaw. They are helpful in predicting and explaining voting results.

As far as gender goes, the United States has .97

male voters as compared to females. The school has 54% male students, giving males the majority of the school vote but not in the actual election of the country as a whole. In a Pew Research Center survey, the results indicate that males often vote Republican more than females, possibly due to their prioritization of economic views. Since more male students comprise the electorate in the school than in the country, this could have been what gave Trump such a larger win over Hillary in The Roundup poll.

Upon questioning, six girls and four boys at a table comprised of six girls and five boys readily agreed with the sentiment that male peers were more likely to support Trump than females. "Hillary's more capable of uniting us," explained Adrian Quintanillo, expressing dissatisfaction towards Trump's social policies. "That's more important than anything else." Harris Wilner, however, gave the other side of the argument, arguing that "Trump will help our veterans and our military" as well as "lessen, or at least slow down, the accumulating national debt." Both Adrian and Harris' arguments are valid and are relatively prevalent for their respective genders, not to rule out exceptions.

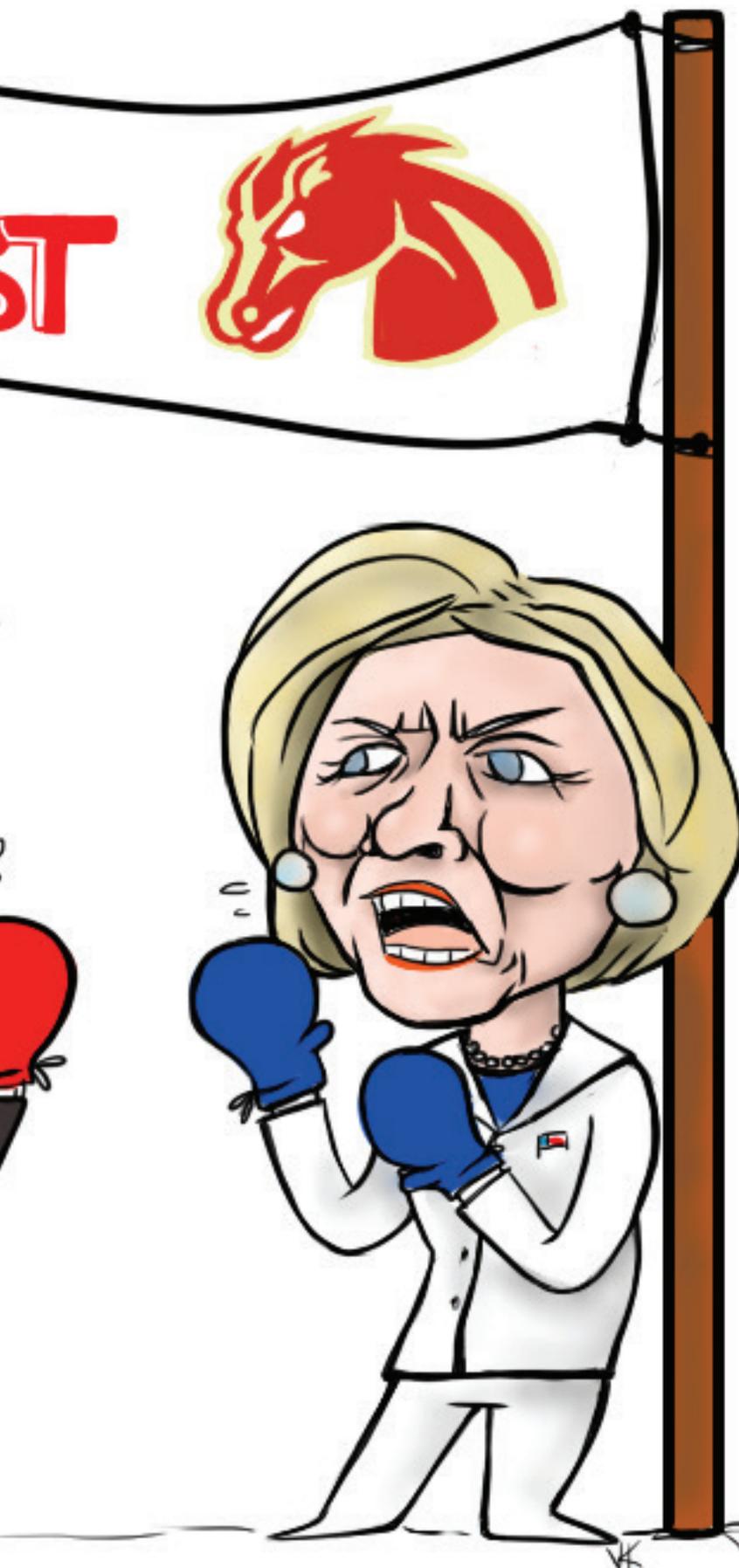
Likewise, those of greater income are more likely to have socially liberal views, which leaves them more prone to vote Democrat. When asked who she thought most adults would vote for, Dani Blaustein, a senior of Hills West, rationalizes that "for the most part, most adults I know are not pure members of either political party. They're usually fiscally conservative but socially liberal. However, if they do categorize themselves into a party, it tends to be Democrat more often than not." Dani was not the only one to feel this way when asked what political views most adults in Half Hollow Hills, which is a fi-

nancially well-off district, held. In fact, most every student who was asked answered similarly.

Although this really only applies directly to adults since students do not yet have incomes of their own and have not acquired the political mindsets that are attached to them, it is applicable in two ways. First, teachers were able to vote in The Roundup's mock election so their views are ingrained in the results. Second, students are subject to political socialization from their parents, their family's values being more influential to their political views than even the media's or their friends'.

A survey from Pew Research Center proves this, revealing that if the parent's political party was Democrat, 66% of the students also identified as Democrat. Likewise for Independents, a majority of 53% of children adopting the same party, and Republican, 51% doing the same. This tendency for students to vote similarly to their parents is also a possible factor behind the Youth Initiative Leader's survey results for the school not matching that of the country's.

Essentially, each disparity and similarity between the national results and the school results of The Roundup and the Youth Initiative Leadership can be easily explained by fundamental differences in demographics between the country and the school. Regardless of whether voters chose Trump or Hillary, voting demographic trends remind us that we are merely one opinion of many and it is we as a country who decide the president; no single person can either be fully



By Alyssa Ng / World News Editor

# Dying, But Not Dead Yet

The largest living thing on (hence the term “coral bleaching”). One of the co-

The Great Barrier Reef is located off the coast of the Great Barrier Reef is of northeastern Australia, time, as coral bleaching is where wilderness and nature has thrived for nearly 500,000 years. However, extensive period of time. National Geographic re-

ported that fifty percent of the coral reef off of Cape York is now decimated. The Great Barrier Reef, the largest and perhaps most famous coral reef system in the world, is in the process of dying due to factors influenced by humans, such as climate change. Since climatic patterns are shifting dramatically, global coral bleaching is becoming an even more prominent issue than it once was.

Coral bleaching occurs when warm ocean water causes the coral to pass its thermal threshold to the point that the coral expels tiny algae, zooxanthellae. Zooxanthellae is of paramount importance because of its symbiotic relationship with the coral; the coral's tissue acts as a safe home for the algae and in return the algae supplies it with food and nutrients. The loss of the zooxanthellae results in the coral turning completely white

bleaching”). One of the contributing factors in the partial death of the Great Barrier Reef is time, as coral bleaching is not fatal unless ocean water remains warm for an extended period of time. Ocean acidification is also a major contributor as well. The pH of the ocean, which is normally around a basic 8.2, has dropped by .1. This difference in number is by no means insignificant; it describes a 25% increase in acidity of the ocean water, disrupting oceanic ecosystems. As the atmospheric amounts of carbon dioxide increase due to the burning of fossil fuels, the ocean is forced to increase

the amount of carbon dioxide it is absorbing. Once it is absorbed, the chemical compound reacts with the seawater to form carbonic acid, lowering the pH and making it more acidic. Unfortunately, these ramifications are irreversible. Coral reefs are essential, as they provide shelter and nutrients for approximately 125,000 animal species that live underwater, which is why they earned the nickname “rainforest of the sea.”

They also regulate the amount of carbon dioxide in the ocean. The absence of coral reefs would evidently point in the direction that marine life will suffer from chronic nutritional deficiencies as well as irregularities in the environment. Not only will the loss of coral reefs be damaging to underwater habitats but it will be damaging to humans as well. It protects shorelines from high tides and strong waves, especially during tropical storms. Economically, healthy reefs lead to good tourism rates; the commercial value of U.S. fisheries from coral reefs is an estimated \$100 million. Surprisingly, scientists have found uses for it in medicine as well. A drug called ‘Halaven’ was introduced to the pharmaceutical industry in 2010 as a way to improve the survival among women who have metastases. Halaven is made of sea sponges, which prosper in coral reefs.

The alarming news has prompted numerous students to treasure nature even more. “This is such a disgrace to humanity,” said Senior Karishma Malholtra, “We’re failing to protect mother earth and its beauty. We need to learn how to leave it alone.” This issue has allowed students to have thoughtful and realize that nature is not something that can magically reappear once its gone, its gone. Viktoria Sims stated,

“Most people don’t believe in it or think it’s a minor emergency. They don’t seem to understand the true impact the Great Barrier Reef has on our global life and ecosystems. If it dies, a lot of life dies with it.” After all of the aforementioned information, it may seem that death is inevitable for the “rainforest of the sea.” Although one cannot rectify the damage inflicted, we can still attempt to prevent further damage. Unfortunately, having all citizens and businesses “go green” is a little unrealistic since some don’t even perceive climate change as a predicament or plainly do not believe climate change exists at all. However, changing small aspects of your life like using alternative energy can make a world of a difference. “As a student, I feel like I can help save the environment by using less water when showering and using the faucet and recycling paper and plastic,” asserted Laila Iqbal. Simple actions like conserving water, using eco-friendly products on your lawn (to reduce polluted runoff), and reducing the emission of fossil fuels by carpooling, walking, or riding a bike are ways one can protect and save the world’s treasured Great Barrier Reef. “There’s always things you can do. It doesn’t matter if you’re a student or an adult. You can use solar energy, make your own compost, or pick up litter wherever you see it,” added Viktoria Sims, “I’ve always tried to do my part in being eco-friendly; I always recycle, never litter, and try to keep my electric use to a low general standard. The ways you can help are endless.”

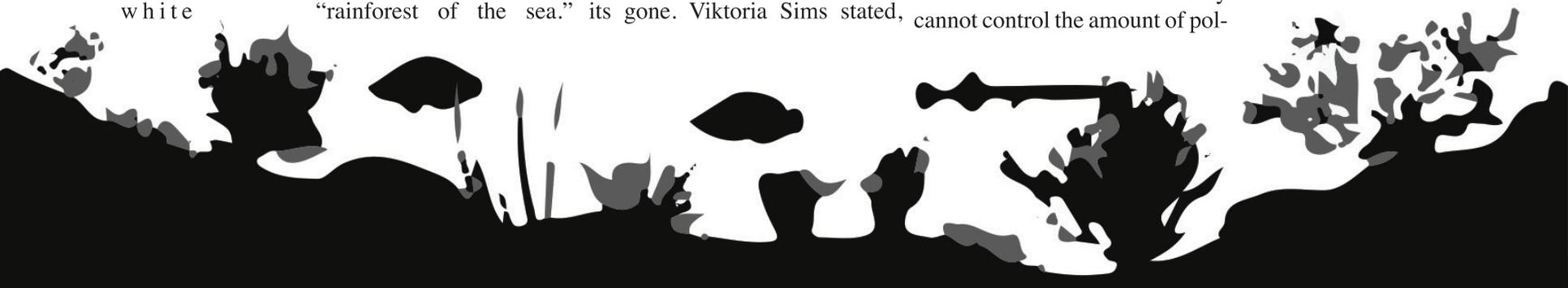
Back in 1998, President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 13089, establishing the Coral Reef Task Force. This agency’s responsibility is to map and monitor the coral reef system as well as promoting conservation of the environment. The limitations of this agency are clear; it can monitor the causes of the coral reefs’ death but ultimately cannot control the amount of pollution contributed by buildings, cars, and homes or how fishermen exploit the environment by overfishing. Then in 2001, the United Nations addressed the contributing factors and secured funds for programs and agencies geared toward the preservation of coral reefs. As it turned out, governmental involvement did not help in the slightest because, once again, they cannot completely prohibit people from doing things that are environmentally unsafe. Currently, scientist Ruth Gates from the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology is attempting to breed the coral in the Great Barrier to have the ability to tolerate high-stress situations like drastic shifts in temperature. Through this technique, the coral will be able to survive coral bleaching. A similar solution is proposed by marine scientist Peter Harrison. He hopes that by flooding the damaged area with healthy coral sperm and eggs, the coral reef will regrow. Sadly, these solutions are still being researched and is not backed by evidence that it has repaired the Great Barrier Reef yet. Outside of the United States, the Australian and Queensland government released a report in March, stating that they have made an admirable effort by investing 2 million dollars through the Reef 2050 Plan, and made substantial progress. The plan includes port legislation, a historic ban on the dumping of dredge materials, improvement of water quality, and focuses on monitoring the recovery of the bleached coral.

Online news sources and social media were the greatest assets to environmentalists by bringing attention to this tragic situation. Pictures of white, decrepit coral reefs flooded the Instagram and Facebook, sending an almost seismic shock-people pictured the Great Barrier Reef to look colorful and not like it was about to disintegrate at any second.

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# IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME: NEXT YEAR, PLAN AHEAD BEFORE YOU PLEDGE

BY NICOLE ROSENTHAL / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Across the nation, seniors from all walks of life have already begun to submit their college applications in hopes of fulfilling their future career goals and diving into the boisterous scene of college fun. Some students plan to continue to play sports, while others long to join familiar student-run organizations that may have run in their own high school, such as a foreign language club, community service organization, or student-run newspaper. Seniors have the opportunity to test the waters in high school with these extracurriculars before entering college - but with the plethora of high schoolers thinking about joining Greek Life in college each year, and the lack of information students have access to, many students remain in the dark until after they pledge.

About nine million college students in the United States are currently members of a Greek organization. Whether they join to make social connections, build their resumes, learn necessary leadership skills or just to go to parties, every single fraternity and sorority member has a different experience than the next. “[Greek life] experiences are not all about partying but just having fun as a brotherhood,” said Jordan Camina, a Hills West alumnus and Vice President of the Delta Sigma Phi chapter at the University of Michigan. “My experience has certainly been unique, and I am a strong believer that you get out, what you put in. I know plenty of people in chapters that just go with the flow and attend events as general members and others that are actively leading events and improving their skills.”

Yet, there is still a stigma that has surrounded the words “fraternity” and “sorority” for decades now, only gaining popularity in the recent years. There is absolutely no question that fraternities and sororities are notoriously associated with hazing, drinking and over-the-top partying. Statistics agree, as since 1975, there has been at least one hazing-induced death per year across college campuses, with more than 80% of these deaths being alcohol-related. With a rise in safety concerns from the public surrounding Greek life on campus, one question has been posed: why do we still have Greek life in 2016, and do we still need it?

In order to answer that question, we must first go back to a time before Fatty Wap, Animal House, and red cups.

On November 25, 1825, five Union College students from upstate New York joined together to form a private circle in order to engage in educational debates and discussions. Naming their group the Kappa Alpha Society, members met routinely to prepare themselves for aspects of their respective careers that their professors didn't train them for, and to discuss topics that were not covered during regular class time. As a result of these “secret” meetings, fraternities became oft-referred to as “secret societies,” and thus the mys-

tique of greek life was born. As these societies quickly spread to other campuses (and the first sorority emerged in 1831), Greek organizations consisted of a network of supporters, with brothers and sisters vowing each other's loyalty to the death.

“My experience with sororities and fraternities here ... is one that not many have the privilege of experiencing,” said University of Alabama sophomore and former Hills West student Amanda Jimenez. “Alabama has one of the largest Greek organizations in the nation, and we have the most pristine way of going through rush. Especially with sororities. There's a lot that goes into Greek organizations, and most of it is good, [but] some [of it is] bad. At my school, [Greek life] is one of the largest things that people come here for. ...My campus just recently lost many Greek life people to suicide as well.”

In fact, nearly twenty-five percent of college students experience a mental health disorder each year, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness. One study concluded that 21% of moms and dads believe their sorority daughters suffer from poor body image as a result of their organizational involvement, compared to only 7% of independent kids who held this perception. Additionally, outside the Greek system, 40.9% of college females admit to abusing alcohol, whereas sorority girls drink heavily at a rate of 62.4%. If it weren't present enough in the lives of teenagers, the pressure to fit in and belong within a sorority or fraternity is elevated, as the sense of community is heightened and members are expected to behave in unity.

[The] “need-to-belong” culture exists in greek life everywhere,” added Camina. “People inherently want to be accepted. I have seen kids on multiple occasions ... blatantly lie in order to be perceived as cool by one of our brothers. It is

pretty easy to see right through [them] and we don't want those kind of people in our chapter. People will do pretty much whatever it takes to earn respect of the brothers.”

However, contrary to popular belief, there remains a positive side to institutionalized greek life. “There are so many different kinds of sororities/ fraternities,” added Jimenez. “There's regular Greek life that takes people of all aspects, there's educational fraternities like business, theater, psychology, [and] there's religious sororities/fraternities. I am in a theater fraternity called Alpha Psi Omega, and it's one of the most incredible things I'm involved in. AΨΩ is way different than Greek life here at UA because we are co-ed and we do have members of the LGBTQ community. We go through pledge process but we are also an honors society. It's fun and I have found a home.”



How- ever, Kirdahy insists that his involvement in greek life has given him a platform to show off his merits. “My frat[ernity] is an honor society for transfer students, so it's honestly an honor to be a part of Tau Sigma. A member of the honor society gets to graduate with a society in his back pocket that shows merit. [For] example, as part of Tau Sigma, I will graduate with the ability to say ... [that] I was on the Dean's list due to my high GPA.”

It's true that charity and donations aren't the first words that come to mind when discussing Greek life -- however, many groups already implement generosity and charity as one of their main goals. In fact, when it comes to donating to their alma-maters, Greek-involved alumni give four times as much as their non-Greek counterparts, and account for 75% of all total college and university donations. Belonging to a fraternity or sorority increases one's chances of completing a degree, with 71% of Greeks graduating

versus 50% of non-Greeks. Both The Daily Beast and Newsweek praised Zeta Tau Alpha and Sigma Chi as the most charitable Greek organizations, as they respectively donated \$384,039 and \$1,436,883 to non-profits in 2011 — more than any others.

“We do a variety of community services, from volunteering at the Ronald McDonald house to cutting down invasive species in the local parks. Our national service and philanthropy partner is the Red Cross and we host multiple events per year to help raise money for the organization ... I really believe that greek life unfairly receives criticism from students not involved as well as the university administration as many people do not look at all of the good that chapters do to help the community. For example, our chapter raised over \$3,000 dollars and all chapters combined raised over \$50,000 dollars due to the Michigan Mudbowl for the Motts Children's Hospital. I don't know of any other campus organizations with so much influence.”

By extension, success is also not foreign to former greeks: since 1825, all but three U.S. presidents have been members of a fraternity, while 85% of Fortune 500 executives were also pledged members. The first female astronaut was Greek, along with the first female senator; college graduation rates are 20% higher among Greeks than non-Greeks.

“I believe that Greek Life has made me a significantly better leader in general,” concluded Camina. “I never realized how difficult it was to be in charge of 75+ men, but have learned a great deal since assuming my position. Our fraternity moto is “Better men, Better Lives” and we as members make sure to hold ourselves to a higher standard. It is great to have people watching your back and keeping you in line and focused on daily basis.”

Participation in greek life can be an extremely rewarding experience, as long as you do your research before fully committing. With community service, activism and leadership involvement, there are many opportunities to give back to the community and share the entire experience with peers.

“I do not recommend that you join a fraternity [right away]; I recommend that you rush [participate in the process of recruitment] at your university and make the determination if it is for you. I had no intention of joining greek life before I came to Michigan, but by the third week of freshman year I was dead set on joining a chapter. Everything in life is what you make of it, and there is a place for everybody in greek life if you just look hard enough.”

Likewise, Kirdahy's advice for all seniors looking to pledge next year is simple: “For me, being in the fraternity I'm in really puts to light for myself how well I did the first year [of college]. If you don't feel comfortable, don't join. If you join and then it starts to make you uncomfortable, leave. Live for you, don't make dumb decisions and regret them.”

# YOU CAN SIT WITH US

By Julia Jassey / Political Writer

We've all been there. Walking into the cafeteria, doing that rapid once-over, hoping you don't make eye contact with anybody as you probe the room in fruitless search for a familiar face.

It's the age-old predicament: Who do I sit with at lunch?

Sixteen-year-old Natalie Hampton from Sherman Oaks, California knew that sinking feeling all too well, inspiring her to create Sit With Us, an innovative new app that provides students with a forum to find a lunch table. Hampton herself was a victim of the all-too-familiar allegory of lunchroom bullying, the situation increasing in severity so much so that she ultimately had to transfer schools. Upon realizing that she was not a unique case, with students all over the world suffering just as she had, her brainchild was conceived: an app that would revolutionize cafeterias everywhere.

Any student can sign up for their district's branch of Sit With Us and participate in the movement. Although its backstory is complex, navigating the app itself is simple. Each person sets up a profile, providing their name, school, a picture, and a brief description of themselves. You have the choice of utilizing the app for the sole purpose of finding a table, or pledging to become an Ambassador. As an Ambassador, one is expected to join the anti-bullying campaign, for which Hampton is such an avid advocate, thus prevent-

ing others from suffering the same fate that she did. Moreover, ambassadors can choose to host events, or Open Table, for the date and lunch period that they designate. Open Tables are open to anybody who shares the lunch period. To discuss joining tables, users can interact with and message others via Sit With Us's in-app Chat fea-

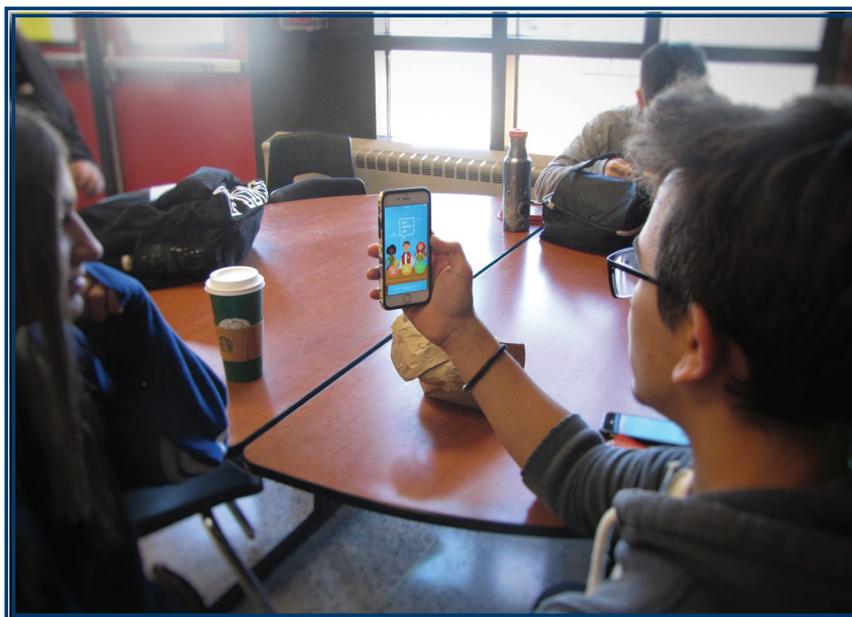
gram, have taken on the initiative of spreading Sit With Us throughout our school. Posters have decorated hallways, promoting the movement among the student body. Most students find this idea to be one that will promote a more positive school environment. "If kids are left alone," said sophomore Dan Cohen, "then they're not

enemy said, "but they want to make friends but they can't just go to somebody's table because they have their own friend group and it's kind of hard to just join them, so an app would be very helpful."

However, support for the Sit With Us is not unanimous. Some fear that it acts as a crutch: Instead of students learning important social skills that will be necessary later in life, they can turn to a screen. "If you're so shy to the point where you can't ask someone, 'Hey can I sit here?,' you're not going to go on an app," said sophomore Steven Secreti.

Others worry that usage of Sit With Us may inadvertently cause bullying among the student body. Mrs. Reynolds, on the other hand, is optimistic that students will use the app responsibly. "I'd like to think our students have the best of intentions but I can't say it would never happen. I'm just hoping that other students may think about that and take measures to prevent that from happening."

Sit With Us may be a new app, but it has already received significant positive acclaim. With a four star rating on the Apple App Store, it is clear that Sit With Us is paving the way for the next generation of innovators. The age-old jungle of the lunchroom may finally be tamed, all because of an inspired high school junior. Unlike Mean Girls' North Shore High, in High School West's cafeteria, you can sit with us.



ture, eliminating the unease that may accompany sitting at a table of people with whom they've never spoken. The app has earned overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Mrs. Reynolds and Mr. Rakamaric, advisors of the Peer Ambassadors pro-

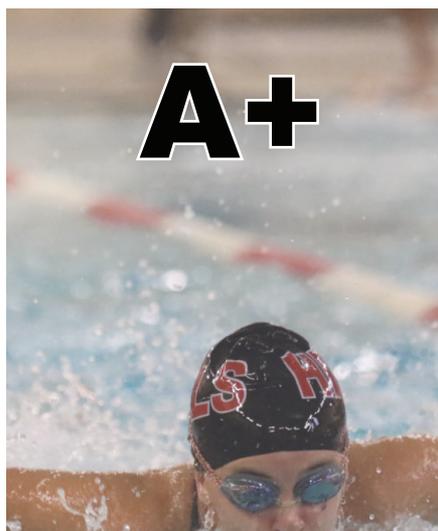
going to have any support system and not have anybody to discuss their problems with, and that can cause more stress on their part." Sophomore Jeremy Gourgues agreed with the idea. "There are some people who don't have a lot of friends," Jer-

## FALL SEASON REPORT CARD

By Matthew Gold and Nick Steele / Sports Editor and Assistant Sports Editor

### Girls' Swimming

Without a doubt, the Girls' Swimming team continued to impress this season [Compared to last season how?]. Finishing with a 9-0 regular season record, the girls are sending at least 5 people to states and over 10 to counties this upcoming postseason. They'll be looking for redemption at Counties this year, after just coming up short last season, as well as a chance to defend their League Championship Title earned decisively in 2015.



# A+

### Boys' Football

Expectations for this football season could not have been any higher, as the team placed all the way to the Suffolk AA Championship before suffering a gut wrenching loss to Newfield last year. With senior quarterback Anthony Lucarelli graduated this past spring, it was up to Sophomore Gerald Filardi to fill the void. With the help of elite skill players, such as running back Deyvon Wright and wide receiver Cameron Jordan, the boys have been able to outscore opponents by an incredible 226-98 margin. This type of production, coupled with a formidable defense, is what has led to an overall 6-2 record and a playoff berth. Can this team learn from last years' mistakes and capitalize on this opportunity?



# A

### Boys' Soccer

The boys' soccer team completed a majestic regular season as the team finished second in League IV with a 10-5-2 record, and was able to secure a 10th seed playoff spot. A two-game losing streak after a 2-0 start proved costly as the losses contributed to their fall from first place at the end of the season. High points of the regular season included plays such as the two separate overtime wins due to goals from Leo Mussachia and Jordan Nason. Unfortunately, the team was forced to think about what could've been, when Northport handed them a 1-0 loss, subsequently knocking them out in the first round of the playoffs just a short few weeks ago. With numerous influential juniors returning, and players from an undefeated JV team coming up, the future looks bright for this well known soccer club here at Hills West.



# A-

### Girls' Soccer

This year's girls soccer team did not live up to their own regular season goals, finishing the season with a 3-6-2 overall record. This was due in large part to a four-game losing streak that started on September 16th and continued all the way through the first week of October. The team, however, showed us that sometimes it's when your back is against the wall that you perform at your best, as they quickly began a resilient finish to the season. Getting the girls back on track was a gritty 1-0 game against West Babylon, helping propel them to the playoffs. Although their journey to the promised land didn't go as planned, as William Floyd sent the Lady Colts packing with a 2-1 loss, their determination looks promising for a return to success in years to come.



# B+