

“The only thing that makes [being mixed] uncomfortable is the way people respond to it.”
-Zoe Mills P. 4

“In one Wilson engineering class, only one of thirty students is female.”
-Ella Feldman P. 7

“[Wilson’s Track] may be the only 342 meter track in the world.”
-Erin Doherty P. 12



Woodrow Wilson High School THE BEACON

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Tracking Splits Students Along Racial Lines

Gregory Kopetsky
Web Features Editor

Former principal Pete Cahall often said that you can look into a classroom and immediately be able to tell whether it is AP or on-level.

This is because 91 percent of white students at Wilson are currently taking an advanced class, compared to 39 percent of black students.

Even though segregation was outlawed over 60 years ago, tracking systems have continued its legacy. In 1968 boundary changes allowed Wilson to become a diverse school, but other programs were instituted which led to tracking.

“There were almost no black kids in the upper tracks,” said Louis Hankins, Wilson class of ’72. “It was weird because as far as the kids were concerned, we were all alike.”

Wilson, along with most other public high schools in America, administered standardized tests in elementary school that would determine the student’s educational future.

Thomas Poore, class of ’71, recalls being tested in fourth grade. He remained on the honors track throughout his school years.

“You never heard of anyone moving up or down from classes,” Poore said.

CONT. ON PG 8



Photo by Will Hamlin

OUR OWN MARCH MADNESS - Intramural basketball is coming to the end of its season. The teams play in the gym on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and students can watch for \$1.

CLASSES IN THE CLOSET - Kadesha Bonds’ Mass Media classes have been relinquished to a second floor storage room for the month of March due to PARCC testing. The room has no lighting and one electrical outlet. The room fits eight computers and is a tight squeeze.



Photo by Henry Shuldiner

Student Reflects on Racial Culture Shock

Kellik Dawson
Contributor

I have lived in DC my entire life and have also gone to DC public schools since Pre-K, but my first time going to a school with more than seven white people was freshman year. Until then I had gone to predominantly black schools, and even there the classicism was very intense, but our quality of education was slim to none.

My elementary school (Bunker Hill, now Brookland Education Campus) was a run-down school that my entire family had gone to. Our fun

there was watching people fight and playing Four Square on broken asphalt because someone burned down our playground, and it was “under construction,” though we saw no progress.

We wore uniforms, and everyone’s social stature was based on their shoes. If you didn’t have the right shoes, you were shunned pretty easily. This hierarchy continued to my middle school which was Hardy, where the worst thing you could do was wear “U.S.P.A.”

Though I knew by then

CONT. ON PG 3

DCPS Budget Grows as Wilson Faces Cuts

Brian Keyes
Junior Editor

Interim Principal Gregory Bargeman announced two weeks ago that DCPS is decreasing Wilson’s per-student allocation by \$970, resulting in a \$300,000 cut in funds. Meanwhile, enrollment could increase by nearly 200 students.

“The mayor had a deficit when she came into office,” Bargeman said, “and in order for the school system to pay for some of the new educational

initiatives, they had to make cuts from some schools.”

Wilson’s budget is determined by its enrollment: we receive money for each individual student, and extra money for those students deemed “at-risk.” The current amount funded for each at-risk pupil is \$1,121, but would rise to around \$2,000 in next year’s budget. However, the overall per-pupil allocation is being decreased, resulting in the deep cuts.

Wilson’s budget is being cut

despite an overall 3.4 percent budget increase to the whole of DCPS that Chancellor Kaya Henderson announced recently in a press release.

Kim Bayliss, president of the PTO said that DCPS has made the decision to focus on at-risk students, creating the need to lower the overall allocation per student.

Matthew Frumin, former chair of the Wilson

CONT. ON PG 2

Wilson Representatives Brief Congress About AP Affordability

Helen Malhotra
Web News Editor

Three members of the Wilson community briefed congressional staff members on the importance of AP exams and affordability for low-income students. With federal funding, Wilson has tripled the number of students in AP classes, but now, this funding is in jeopardy. Academic coordinator Alex

Wilson was asked by Trevor Packer, College Board’s AP Director, to select a teacher and a student to brief the staff of those senators and congressmen involved in the ESEA reauthorization. Wilson chose Molly Ramos and Devin Rivera to give personal anecdotes about their experiences with AP testing and the importance of affordability. Banneker High School sent representatives to

the briefings along with Wilson, because they too offer many AP classes.

The Federal AP Test Fee Program was added to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, ESEA, in 1999 to encourage low-income students to participate in AP classes and take AP tests. The program provides a subsidy for low-income students, paid for partly by the government and partly

Read about this year’s intramural basketball tournament, and see pictures at www.thewilsonbeacon.com

Wilson alumnus Chris Adams was shot and killed this past month. To read about the community’s reaction, go to www.thewilsonbeacon.com

Career Counseling Provides Alternate Options

Lauren ReVeal
Managing Editor

Many teachers and counselors begin the college talk with students at the start of ninth grade. Seniors then spend months of energy bringing up grades and SAT scores, and writing dozens of essays so they can hopefully get into one of their top colleges. Wilson helps students decide which college is the best fit for those who go to Sandy Bean, the College and Career Center Co-Coordinator, for help. However, college is not for everyone. Whether a student isn't ready for college or just doesn't want to go at all, it can be hard to see any other option. Luckily, Wilson has a plan to solve this issue: career counseling.

The goal of career counseling is to show students how to start looking and applying for a job. They learn the skills necessary to appeal to interviewers and determine personal strengths and aptitudes to figure out what kind of job would be best for them.

Though it is still in the workshop phase, the counseling will become three one-hour after-school courses before the end of this year. The current plan is for interested students to learn about resume writing and interview skills, and hear from Wilson alumni and others who

went straight into the workforce after graduation.

The program is the brainchild of Senior Career Counselor of the United States Agency for International Development Jeannie Oster, with parent volunteer Cathy Sledz, and Bean. Bean brought the other two together when she realized their mutual interest in helping students find another path after high school.

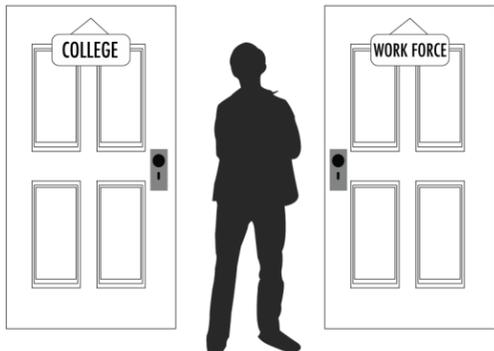
"Much like my essay workshop, there was no demand, nobody asking for it. But I knew that there were people who needed help," said Bean.

Working does not have to mean never attending college. Oster thinks that the jobs found could be part-time or part of a gap year. Still, she believes that anyone can find a good job without going to college.

"The big companies don't care if you have a college degree," she said, referring to jobs in the Information Technology field.

"Nobody ever woke up at the age of 20 and said, 'Oh my God, I haven't been to college yet... a lot of people wake up and go 'Oh, now I'm ready to go to college,'" said Bean.

With the money and confidence that this career counseling is aiming to bring, maybe more students will have that moment. •



Graphic by
Jane Martin

Less Money, More Kids

CONT. FROM PG 1

Management Corporation and former Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, said, "If DCPS had applied the per pupil minimum from last year, \$9276, to Wilson's projected enrollment for next year, Wilson would have been budgeted \$17.6 million, \$1.8 million more than it has been budgeted so far. Indeed, instead Wilson is being asked to serve 170 more students, with 309,600 fewer dollars." This means that Wilson will suffer a net loss.

As a result of these changes, Bargeman said there is a possibility that Wilson will have to reduce staff by 14 people along with funding for club sports.

"It shouldn't affect programs in the building, but now we have to use some of the funds from the money we get from building

rentals," said Bargeman. "We are using some of those funds to supplement the funds we are losing."

The plan to lay off 14 staff members came about after Bargeman was given the new budget, and made the choice that no teachers would lose their positions. Because those 14 people have not been notified yet, Bargeman declined to say which positions would be terminated next year.

"They are not being fired. The staff simply needs to be reduced because you cannot run a school on a deficit," Bayliss said.

Bayliss also recently wrote an email addressed to Muriel Bowser on behalf of the Wilson PTO, asking for a \$900,000 increase from the initial budget for Wilson in order for "Wilson [to] maintain its high quality academic programs

and maintain a safe and secure environment for students, teachers and staff in our facility."

Teachers at Wilson were disappointed to learn about how large the budget cut would be. English teacher Molly Ramos said, "I think that it's unfortunate that cuts are being made, and that the cuts may affect class sizes and therefore a teacher's ability to connect with students on an individual level."

Larger class sizes were cited as a possibility in a letter sent out by Bargeman when the new budget was announced. "I mean obviously if there was a different way to get the money that would be better," Ramos continued. "I realize cuts are necessary from time to time, but on such a big scale at a school like Wilson, that is already overpopulated, it will certainly put a strain on teachers." •

Tigers Advocate for Affordable APs

CONT. FROM PG 1

by the College Board. However, Congress is considering taking away the federal funding for AP Exams.

ESEA is currently undergoing reauthorization. There is potential for the federal funding to be written out of authorization, in which case federal subsidy for AP exams would not continue.

For the 2014-2015 school year, the cost of each AP Exam is \$89, while the federal subsidy per exam for low-income students is \$37. College Board and the DC government also pay a subsidy, further reducing the fee of AP exams to \$18 per test. If federal funding was discontinued, the increased

payment would fall on either the students or the school.

Ramos and Rivera were given over a week to prepare their personal statements. On Tuesday, March 10, they traveled down to the Capitol to share their thoughts on the funding's importance. They attended two different briefings; one for the Senate and one for the House. Though no senators or congressmen were present, there were about 15 staff members who reported back to their representatives with information on what Ramos, Rivera, and others had to say.

Ramos said, "I learned that there are a tremendous number of students that are benefitting from AP exams and I hope it [federal funding] continues." •



Photo Courtesy of Devin Rivera

ACTIVE CITIZENS - English teacher Molly Ramos, senior Devin Rivera, and Academic Coordinator Alex Wilson testified at the Capitol about the importance of federal funding for APs.

DC Continues Fight for Marijuana Legalization

Rachel Page
Features Editor

In the battle for marijuana legalization, DC is not surrendering. House Republicans have criticized DC mayor Muriel Bowser for implementing Initiative 71, which legalized possession of marijuana beginning February 26. It allows adults over the age of 21 to grow and carry small amounts of marijuana, and gift small amounts to friends, although selling the substance is still illegal.

The initiative appeared on November 2014 election ballots, and 70 percent of DC voters approved it. It did not pass by a majority in just one out of the 143 precincts-- Precinct 9, also known as Spring Valley. This Ward 3 precinct also has the highest percentage of

Republican voters in DC: 25.8 percent in 2012, according to the Washington Post.

Despite overwhelming support from DC residents, legalization in the District has met with continuous opposition from conservative Republican Congress members. In December, House Republicans passed a bill that forbade DC from spending any of its funds on decriminalization. However, the DC Council argues it can bypass this restriction because it came after the vote on Initiative 71-- a claim that could still be challenged by Congress in the coming months.

On February 24, members of the House Committee on Oversight and Government

Reform sent a letter to Bowser criticizing her support of the initiative. "If you decide to move forward tomorrow with the



Photo by Kai Casey/CU Independent

legalization of marijuana in the District, you will be doing so in knowing and willful violation of the law," the letter reads. It also includes a request for the names and salaries of every DC employee involved with the passage of Initiative 71.

The DC Council has sent several documents to Congress in response to the request, but refuses to disclose the names of employees because of concerns for personal safety.

Voting rights activists have pointed to Congress's response as a reason why DC statehood is necessary. DC laws are often used as opportunities for senators from other states to grandstand on issues that are popular with their own constituencies.

DC congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, who has been vocal in the past about both the need for marijuana legalization and DC statehood, maintains that the initiative is a step in the right direction for equality in DC. "The stark racial difference

in marijuana convictions is a national disgrace and an important racial justice issue," she said in a written statement for a congressional press conference.

However, the racial impacts of the law are complicated by the fact that DC is a mixture of federally- and locally-owned land. Marijuana is still illegal under federal law, meaning that possession in public housing complexes -- which are primarily inhabited by black residents nationwide, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition -- remains prohibited. The trend of disproportionate arrests of black citizens for drug possession is not over. Norton hopes that Initiative 71 will be the beginning of a movement towards racial justice in drug convictions and true self-governance for the District. •

Wilson Becomes Too Big for its Building

Zach Essig
Junior Editor

Wilson is getting bigger and the building can't keep up. In 2011, the Wilson campus was renovated to maximize student's resources and to create a space for the increasing student population. At the time of the renovation, Wilson's student body was only 1,523 so the building was built accordingly with a maximum capacity of 1,500 students. However, the creation of additional classrooms has since raised the capacity to 1,700, according to DCPS's 2014 Master Facilities Plan.

Now, approximately 1,790 students attend Wilson, almost 100 students over capacity. Next year, Wilson is expected to have a student body of roughly 1,878, 178 students over capacity.

During the renovation, many voiced their concerns about building a school with such a low maximum capacity. Matt Frumin, who chaired the Wilson Management Corporation that oversaw the project for the Wilson

community, told project managers that the proposed building capacity would "inevitably raise serious challenges." Frumin, and others, noted that it would not "be long before Deal alone had 400 students per grade (this year there are over 450 in one grade at Deal) and if the modernized Wilson was seen as a success and drew high percentages of students from feeder schools, the enrollment pressure would be significant." Despite the concerns from the school community, the building team went ahead with the original plan. India Olchefske, a Wilson alumna, explained that there was a "feeling that when we went into the new building, these problems would be resolved."

Next year's projected increase has prompted discussion of possible safety concerns with the building over capacity. "The tightly packed stairwells don't allow for a very quick way out, which could be stressful should there be a real emergency," sophomore Hannah Wyatt wrote in a message.

Also in question is whether Wilson will have enough resources and staff to accommodate the anticipated enrollment, particularly with the budget cuts announced by DCPS for the 2015-2016 school year. Wilson's PTSO has decided to make its priority "the concerns over large class sizes and lack of resources to close the achievement gap." The PTSO is also "asking for funding for more teachers and to reduce the number of administrative staff that will have to be let go."

The Wilson administration has worked to accommodate the overpopulated school by converting science labs, computer labs, and teacher workrooms into classrooms. Interim Principal Gregory Bargeman said that Wilson is "trying to get funds to do some construction within the building." He pointed out that room 416, the common space on the fourth floor, is an area that could be transformed into classrooms to accommodate additional students.

Also changing next year will be Wilson's boundaries,

which will be slightly reduced, according to a DCPS announcement earlier this year. [For more information see thewilsonbeacon.com]. However, reduced boundaries won't reduce Wilson's population next year, because all out-of-boundary students currently enrolled in grades three or above at feeder schools will remain on their path to Wilson. In particular, Wilson's population will increase because the majority of the 1,248 students enrolled in overpopulated Alice Deal Middle School will end up attending Wilson.

Another solution that Wilson administration in conjunction with DCPS discussed to accommodate the growing Wilson student body was temporary mobile-classrooms, referred to as demountables. Students and teachers alike have speculated about the value of the addition of these mobile classrooms. However, at this point, "DCPS will not allow Wilson to have demountables or let us spend money to reconfigure some classrooms by building

temporary walls," according to Kim Bayliss, president of the Wilson PTSO.

Student response to the possibility of having demountables had been mixed. "It seems inconvenient for students switching between classes in the building and outside. As well, it feels like it's splitting up the school," junior Katie Power said in a message. "It might encourage kids to leave the school if they're going outside to the mobile classrooms."

The increase in the projected enrollment has prompted a wide range of responses from students, teachers, and parents alike. Academy Coordinator Patrice Arrington said that Wilson is attractive to such a large percentage of the DC population for numerous reasons: "I think the popularity Wilson received is great, because with more students comes more activities... It can't get too big, but I understand why Wilson is so great." •

Best Buddies Breeds Friendship and Respect

By Ella Feldman

Anyone who joins Best Buddies will make more than friends; they will make a difference. Best Buddies, a non-profit organization dedicated to creating a movement to foster opportunities for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), has made its way to Wilson. The organization was founded in 1989, but came to Wilson this year in August. Club members within the special education program get paired with other members and have lunch once a week. Along with basic socializing and spending time together, these weekly meetings serve to plan for upcoming events and fundraisers. Erin Doherty, the junior who started the club, says that the overall goal of Best Buddies is to make friendships and show that people with disabilities need friendships as much as anyone else. This month, Best Buddies has gone even further.

After her first visit to the special education room and interactions with the kids there, Doherty decided she wanted to do something that would benefit the program. Having heard about Best Buddies through a friend, she looked into it more and applied for it at the end of her sophomore year. "The main reason I wanted to start it was to share the bond I had with the kids with the rest of the school," she says of the program. After going through the application process and attending a conference over the summer, she succeeded in bringing the club to Wilson. The club currently has 18 members.

March 4 was Awareness Day for the Spread the Word to End the Word cause, which has the goal of eliminating derogatory use of "retarded" (the r-word) from everyday speech. For the entire month of March, Best Buddies spent time raising



Photo by Anna Bucknum

BFFs - Best Buddies members, from left, Abby Koerner (10), Nora Charles (11), Juliette Fratto (10), and Madison Essig (11) publicize the club at STEP. Students sign a "respect poster," vowing to stop the use of the "R word" as an insult.

awareness for the importance of this issue. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday they set up a banner in the atrium for students to sign and pledge to not use the word. They also had a bake sale, which not only raised awareness, but raised money that will cover their program dues and take the program even further. "We still don't know exactly what we want to use the money for," says president of the club Erin Doherty, "but we plan to use it on supporting the club."

Although it's relatively new, Best Buddies is raising awareness quickly at Wilson, and they're only getting started. Madison Essig, a member of the club, says that Best Buddies "really makes the kids aware of how important it is to not judge kids with disabilities." The club meets Mondays at STEP in room 212, and is always looking for new members. •

OPINIONS

Cultures Differ Even Among Friend Groups

CONT. FROM PG 1

how to stay out of people's way because I refused to pay more than 50 bucks for a pair of shoes, I had never been more surprised than by the supplies we received because of our school's location. Georgetown was a big change from the backside of Brookland I lived in.

I had never seen a Mac till the sixth grade because Bunker Hill couldn't afford computers. We didn't even have music and art because we didn't have a budget for it. Three years of middle school and seven white people later I found myself coming to Wilson with no idea of what to expect, but the

statistics of 50 percent black didn't live up to what I see now.

Coming to this school and befriending white people was like living an actual TV show. I didn't know people actually went to school together from pre-k to their senior year, or that couples celebrated "month-iversaries," and until 10th grade I had never actually experienced a family dinner where people sat around the table and talked without arguing about money.

I can't speak for every black person because I am not every black person but it kind of offends me how a lot of the white people I know take so much for granted. I take two buses every morning to get to

school. The trip is about an hour and a half both ways--a three-hour commute, not including waiting for the buses.

I leave school at around 9 p.m. due to rehearsal for plays and have to wake up by 6:30 a.m. I don't have the luxury of sleeping in and I can't run to school because if I miss my first bus at 7 a.m., another one doesn't come for 40 minutes.

I see my white counterparts angry because their parents didn't buy them the right food for their lunch, but I usually go without lunch or have a friend make me one because I wouldn't have time to make lunch at home even if I had the materials to do it. Going to sleep at a

reasonable hour means choosing between learning lines and doing homework every night, and I can hardly do either of those as is.

I'm not saying that it is the white people's faults for their actions because it isn't. I would be the same if I lived in Tenleytown with my life-long friends around the corner from my high school, and Mom and Dad could give me a couple of twenties because 'Why not, right? That's the life? We can go out of town for a couple of days, maybe even out of the country, because it's just that easy.' You've got the money. And more to spare.

But not everyone does; I

mean I don't. When I came to Wilson I didn't know what to expect. But now that I'm here I guess, as I often hear white people in school say it, "I can't fade."

In the end it's hard to live across the city and have to interact with so many different people. Many don't understand the burden it is, but it doesn't stop me from trying to get it across to the students who never really left Tenleytown. It does suck that I have to commute so far to see friends but I prefer my knowledge of the city compared to those who never felt the need to leave the comfort of their neighborhood. •

First Amendment Always Applies

David Fadul
Staff Writer

Students at Wilson quickly learn that there are many rules in the school, some that don't make sense. Everybody, I'm sure, has walked down the hallway and suddenly asked him or herself why students can't wear hats, or has sat in class and wondered why students can't go to the bathroom for the first or last 15 minutes. Many people have questioned why, if we arrive to school at 9:15, we aren't allowed in until 9:30, at which point the sometimes packed lines at security will make the tardy students even later to the second period of the day. An inquiry to a teacher about this rule, or any of the others on the painfully long list of similarly absurd rules, will usually lead to a response along the lines of "because those are the rules." But for me this answer is not enough.

One of these inexplicable rules is the prohibition of curse words. I can't count on my fingers the amount of times somebody nearby (or I myself) have cursed innocently in class. For better or worse, curse words are a part of most students' everyday vocabulary. However a teacher will take precious lesson time to turn and address the

student.

Defenders of the current rule will say that the prohibition ensures that nobody is offended. Not only do students hear curse words outside of school, there are plenty of curse words in the school curriculum. A book we read in 8th grade at Deal, titled "Into Thin Air," was peppered with the constant cursing of alpinists stuck in a blizzard. "Catcher in the Rye" had the words "damn" and "hell" littered everywhere. "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass" contains dozens of uses of the n-word. Even so, in adherence to the school policy, many English teachers refuse to allow cursing in their classrooms.

They may argue that books are art, and so the cursing is acceptable. This argument, however, does not stand. If it's art, why don't teachers who play music in class allow music with cursing? Is it not art? And how does the cursing in books vary from cursing in real life? Are the same students they feared would be offended by students swearing not offended by the cursing in books? If so, why?

I haven't even mentioned the fact that some faculty curse within earshot of students, or that teachers sometimes show movies with plenty of cursing in them (again, art). The fact that

these occur while some teachers try to enforce the no-cursing rule baffles me.

I've heard many teachers talk about how they're preparing us for the "real world." But the "real world" I know has cursing in the streets, in music, in videos, in movies, in books, in plays, and in all other forms of art and entertainment.

Some defenders of the ban might argue that cursing can be used to insult, taunt, or otherwise bring people down. Arguing this implies that it is difficult to tell the difference between curses used to insult and curses used to express oneself. But this distinction is incredibly simple: one is directed at another person, the other isn't. Schools can be against any language, including cursing, that is used to specifically taunt and insult, but it is short-sighted to declare that all curse words are used in such a way.

To questions about a ban on words and articles of clothing, or any restrictive rule for that matter, the answer should never be "because it's the rule." I cannot think of one valid reason why cursing in school should be prohibited, and if a rule has no valid reasoning behind it then it should be struck down. •

Mixed Race Makes for Mixed Experiences

Zoe Mills
Staff Writer

Being mixed at Wilson has its ups and downs. Although my identity as a person of mixed race shouldn't change the way people think of me, it does. Racial tension isn't uncommon at Wilson, or anywhere in the United States, and, for some people, finding out that I'm actually half black, despite my predominantly white features, means virtually nothing except that I'm maybe a little different.

For many, however, it opens the door to an opportunity of friendship. When fellow classmates learn this unlikely detail about me, I am suddenly a friend, or even a sister. Instead of being clumped into a blob of white kids, I become someone's oldest friend, most trustworthy confidant, or the object of a game in which someone had been guessing about my race with a friend.

I often get the impression from this reaction that I was not thought highly of prior to becoming 'the mixed girl'; that I was someone others had built up to be racist, evil, or maybe arrogant. It usually begins with polite indifference and some guessing about my race, especially on a day when my hair is curlier than usual or my baby hairs are loose.

I don't mind when people ask me if I'm mixed: I am. I don't mind comments along the lines of "It's your hair" or "I could tell because of your eyebrows" (I'm still not sure what that one means), or "Why do you look so white?", or even "I could tell because your hair's a little nappy."

After a while at Wilson, I learned the drill. I drone out the same answers to the same questions: "My mom is white and my dad is black," "I don't know how I got green eyes," "No, that's my dad...what do you mean does my mom look like him? No, she's white," "My mom is white," and "I'm not adopted, I'm mixed."

The most fascinating question for people to ask is whether I say the n-word or not, which I don't. It's uncomfortable and it's never felt like a natural word to slip into a conversation.

Another topic of intrigue is the kind of music I listen to, which usually surprises people of all races, because my favorite genre is rap. Considering it is a predominantly black industry, my affinity for it and the paleness of my skin usually come off as a strange mix to people. I was once found listening to an NWA song, an 80s rap group consisting of names like Dr. Dre and Ice Cube, and was met with a hysterical laugh and a little more respect from a black friend. To her, it was further

evidence that I was mixed. I'll admit that my white mother doesn't like rap, that my black father is the one who raised me and my sisters with it, and that it's also an interest that I mainly only share with friends of mine who happen to be black, but most people don't realize that I can like whatever I want without it being a result of my mixed race.

There is no actual downside to being mixed. I have no problems accepting my race. The only thing that makes it uncomfortable is the way people respond to it. For whatever reason, the moment I become "the mixed girl" in the eyes of my peers, it becomes okay for them to slur things in my direction. In middle school, the first slurs I encountered were "zebra" and "slave child", the first from a white boy in my class and the second from a boy with Hispanic heritage. It is easy to feel more offended by jokes like these if the antagonist is white, but they mean the same thing no matter who they come from. Race doesn't lessen or heighten the insensitivity of slurs like these, but it is a persisting societal norm to accept them when coming from a person of color.

It was only upon coming to Wilson that I first heard "mutt" and "half-breed." I knew those terms existed, but I'd never had them applied to me. They seemed awkward and forced, rather than words that you would actually hear coming out of a person's mouth. Don't get me wrong--these names are mostly used in good fun, and I'll even admit to having laughed in response. However, there is a fine line between a joke and a slur. I often wonder why being mixed is so fascinating and odd to people. Is it not the 21st century?

Although the slurs are more direct, what is more unnerving is when peers discover my dual race and reply, "I wish I was mixed." The comment is flattering, at best, but it makes me wonder if people actually wish they were mixed, or if they just feel the need to compensate for something that they think makes me insecure.

I have also been told that I'm not a minority because of the way I look. I think this is unfair. I know it may not be obvious that I'm mixed, but I should be able to define who I am.

When I tell people that I am mixed, I'm not asking for validation or compliments. I don't want to be treated differently. My being mixed-race doesn't warrant that kind of reaction. It also doesn't give anyone else the right to define who I am. •

Top 10

"That's When You Know" Moments

1. When you say Reno's the move unironically
2. When you don't know what unironically means
3. When you ask a freshman to Prom...
4. ... And they say no
5. When you're the only one to get bagged for putting soda in a water cup at Chipotle
6. When you say "hi" to an administrator...
7. ...And they don't say "hi" back
8. When your friend gets through security with a metric ton of weed but you get caught for having a spoon
9. When your teacher announces the lowest score on a test and you have to play it off like it wasn't you
10. When every single one of these applies to you

THE BEACON

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Our mission is to provide an accurate representation of the diverse views, opinions, and concerns of the students of Wilson High School. We aim to serve as the voice of the students. Through responsible, ethical journalistic practices, we strive to provide thorough, reliable news coverage of issues relevant to Wilson.

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The Beacon is a public forum created for the purpose of expressing the views of and providing information to the Wilson student body. Thank you for reading The Beacon.

We All Need to Work to Close the Gap

By The Beacon Staff

The numbers are disturbing: every statistic shows a stark racial difference in academic achievement at Wilson, with whites and Asians outperforming their black and Hispanic counterparts.

The racial achievement gap in education has been an issue across the United States for decades, and DCPS has the largest achievement gap between black and white (and Hispanic and white) students out of all major urban public school systems in the U.S., according to a 2011 federal study.

Clearly, the achievement gap isn't just a Wilson problem—it has its roots in the racial and economic segregation of DC as a city. However, a big reason it has continued is because no one claims responsibility for it. While of course it isn't entirely our fault, Wilson teachers and students have a responsibility to address the disparities in student achievement.

Teachers need to be conscious of the varying needs of students of different races and backgrounds, and make sure that disadvantaged students have the resources and support they need to succeed in AP classes. Wilson has failed at this in the past: last year's NMSI Saturday study sessions, which

were meant to help minority students, ended up mainly benefiting privileged students who could get to school on a Saturday.

Wilson teachers also need to ensure that they are treating students equitably. On-level classes are stigmatized at Wilson because of the reputation that teachers don't put as much effort into classes that aren't honors or AP. It is imperative to recognize that students in on-level classes still deserve the same level of preparation and education. Without it, the achievement gap is much more difficult to close because students who are placed in regular classes starting freshman year never get the academic foundations they need to succeed in more rigorous courses. The extensive amount of notes and out-of-school work that AP classes require aren't for everyone, and that's okay, but making the choice not to take APs shouldn't mean that your learning is less prioritized.

Even when teachers do try to devote the same amount of energy to regular classes, the way that they talk about them can reinforce negative stereotypes. Every member of The Beacon has heard a teacher complain about their on-level classes at one point.

But students also create and

perpetuate these stereotypes themselves: the guy who doesn't do his homework in AP World is labeled as a loaf rather than a student who needs extra support, regardless of his home situation. These stereotypes are inherently one-dimensional and damage student performance and sense of self, whether it means taking away their confidence in their ability to do work or giving them a false sense of superiority.

Students who have had more economic opportunities often view themselves as smarter instead of recognizing their privilege as the biggest reason for their success. Privileged students need to be aware of this unconscious tendency and actively challenge it.

All students, regardless of privilege, should feel comfortable with opening conversations about the achievement gap at Wilson. It's not our fault that we were put into a tracked system, but we take some of the blame for the achievement gap when we don't work to close it by raising awareness about its existence and being conscious of the ways it affects us – going outside the boxes that have been set out for us. Yes, we were put in boxes, but staying in them is a choice. •

PATRIOT Act Jeopardizes American Freedom

Noah Howard
Contributor

September 11, 2001, two jetliners hit the most prominent buildings of the New York skyline along with a large wing of the Pentagon, and in a matter of minutes reduced them to nothing more than a pile of rubble.

Little did we know that in just over a month a more egregious assault would occur on what makes America than those piles of steel and concrete ever could. This assault would not take the form of masked men murdering innocent civilians, but rather by our own elected officials undermining the very Constitution they swore to defend, with the passage of the PATRIOT Act. Although, we were just toddlers then, the magnitude of this event still impacts our lives today.

The USA PATRIOT Act, less well-known as the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act, was a reactionary measure used to drastically expand the power of the federal government in its fight against the new clandestine foe.

However, due to public outcry for justice and security, this bill was passed at such a

rapid pace that it was signed into law with vague language and little inclusion of the checks and balances that make this country a democracy. The faults were so numerous that the bill allowed for the labeling of most criminal acts within this country as acts of terrorism and for permitting alleged culprits to be thrown into jail indefinitely with no trial and no formal charges levied against them.

An act of terrorism, as defined in the PATRIOT Act, is an activity which is "dangerous to human life" or can "appear to be intended" for that purpose, to "intimidate or coerce a civilian population [or] influence the policy of government by intimidation or coercion."

So according to the U.S. government, most crimes and some legal actions perpetrated within its borders may be classified as acts of terrorism. Isn't a mugging an act of terrorism, because terror is used by the mugger to extort cash from his victim? And isn't launching a protest against the government an act of terrorism, because a large group of civilians is trying to coerce policy change? Such a broad definition

of terrorism can be applied to even the most mundane acts of political activism.

Take Wilson's counter protest against the Westboro Baptist Church, for example. With a Republican-controlled Congress, Wilson's protest could have been labeled as an attempt to influence government policy through intimidation, as such an immense and loud crowd of high school students may be classified as intimidating, solely for the reason that it conflicts with their political agenda. While such a scenario is unlikely, isn't the very fact that it is possible cause for concern?

Key provisions of this bill, which give the government the bulk of its expanded powers, are up for renewal this June. So the key questions to ask yourself are: Do I, a Wilson student, wish to allow the warrantless search and seizure of my personal property and information, and those of my fellow citizens? Do I, a Wilson student, wish to allow the indefinite imprisonment of my fellow citizens without a trial or formal charge levied against them? Do I, an American citizen, stand for tyranny or justice? •



Graphic by Jane Martin

Corrections from our February Issue

Carolina Bayon and Danielle Breslow wrote Wall-E Goes to Mexico.

Carl Stewart took photos of the One Acts.

Laugh With Leo, Before He Hits the Big Time

Eden Breslow
Chloe Leo
Leo Canty
Staff Writers and Contributor

For years, Dave Chapelle has been heralded as the greatest comedian ever to come from the DC area. But now, in our very own midst, a new star has been born. Freshman Leo Lytel is one of the hottest young comedians in the game, with a mature wit that shows wisdom far beyond his years. Get in with him now, before this rising comet hits the big time and leaves our humble Tenleytown home behind.

Leo's interest in comedy sprung in the spring of 2013, after listening to some of his favorite comedians (Louis C.K., Lewis Black, George Carlin, and

the aforementioned Chapelle). He started his comedic career with one magical night of performing standup at the Hyatt hotel in Baltimore, and has since used his connections--mainly his mom, who has found most of the events for him and helped him through the audition process - to get more gigs.

Leo says he is also often approached by audience members who offer performance opportunities. He has already started to build a name for himself, performing at bars, winning competitions, traveling to the Big Apple, and even making a bit of money. But he doesn't do it for the stacks: he enjoys making people laugh, and can see himself potentially pursuing a career in stand-up.

This 15-year-old is already making plans for the future: "I wanna branch out and do more comedy... if not I would also like to write for talk shows or another performer. But yes, my ultimate end goal would be to become an actual stand-up comedian."

The way things have been looking lately, that's a very real possibility. This summer in New York City he landed a spot auditioning for America's Got Talent in front of a panel of celebrity judges.

To Lytel, just getting his name out there feels like winning. You would think going onstage as a 15-year-old in front of an audience of adults would be nerve-racking, but Leo is a pro. His R-rated humor plays

on his age, shocking audiences with jokes about masturbation and sexual education classes that are balanced perfectly with innocent observations about school and parents to create a comprehensive, wide-ranged, and overall hilarious comedic strategy.

One of his popular jokes plays on his age: "I'm 14... I'm single, have been pretty much my whole life. I think it's because I live with my parents, I'm unemployed, and I don't have a car."

Reading about this young talent, you may wonder why you don't already know of him. For someone who seems perfectly comfortable with public speaking, Lytel has a quiet demeanor, with the exception

of his occasional witty remarks. In class he remains laid-back, only occasionally dropping some ingenious clever comment to lighten the mood. Yet ask anyone who's ever chatted with this wunderkind, and they'll tell you, Leo Lytel will grow up to be a definite funny man.

Freshman and fan Tara Bretzfelder shared, "He's really funny, and in class he is always making jokes and I'm laughing the whole time. I love him." Other classmates have described him as "hilarious" (Cal Menditto, 10th), "quirky" (Oscar Lonaues, 9th), and "magnificent" (Aidan Saccocio, 9th). Leo's budding career can be followed on his Youtube channel, Leo Lytel, or through his twitter page @ laughwithleo. •

Generation Starts to Hit Facebook's Unlike Button

Sam Masling
Junior Editor

The pioneer of social media, the giant of connectivity, the access point for everything about everyone you couldn't care less about: Facebook was the definition of social media for many years. If you didn't have a page, you were totally out of the loop.

Since its heyday, Facebook has steadily acquired multiple "hot" social media enterprises, including its largest and most recent acquisition of Instagram for over one billion dollars. People are now joining Facebook more than ever before, with over 1.3 billion active users as of January, 2015, according to Zephoria, an Internet marketing website. However, our generation's obsession with Facebook seems to be fading.

A survey of 26 Wilson students showed that 12 percent don't have a Facebook account, 24 percent have a Facebook account but never use it, 44 percent have a Facebook account and use it semi-regularly but never post, and 20 percent still use it regularly.

Sophomore Nathalie Mitchell uses Facebook for "posting pictures, stalking purposes, and mortifying [her] friends." While posting pictures is a great use, Instagram does that on a much wider scale, generally dominating that section of social media.

Many Facebook users only check their feeds every once in awhile, and often it is just

to get rid of the pesky phone notifications. Sophomore Patrick Mulderig says, "I only open it to get rid of the red bubbles that show up on my phone."

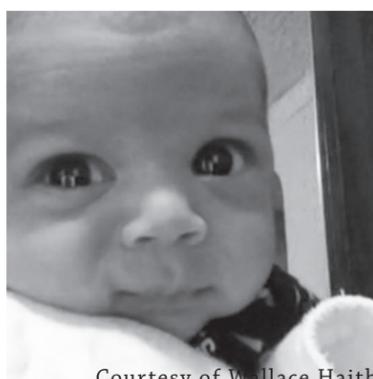
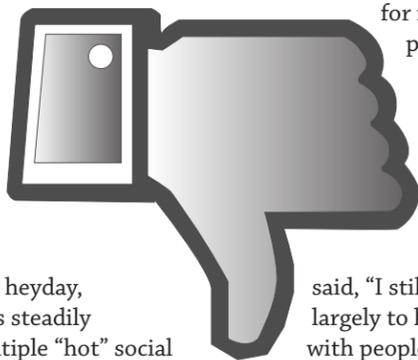
A select few Wilson students still use Facebook for its original purpose: staying connected with people you generally wouldn't communicate with. Senior Nico Colaizzi said, "I still use it a bit, largely to keep in touch with people."

A few years back, Facebook was incredibly active. Everybody's friends were posting status updates, funny links, and pictures constantly. Today that activity is mostly adding to photo albums and commenting on old posts or pictures. As sophomore Cal Menditto puts it, "Facebook has lost its charm. It used to be a lot better but as we've grown up it has gotten a lot less interesting and a lot less fun."

Facebook is definitely not "dead" per se, but our generation is beginning to lose interest. This is due in large part to the advent of new facets of social media and the general tendency of our generation to get bored quickly.

The original giant of social media is slowly fading, and while it continues to attract millions of new users and buy other small enterprises, at Wilson the ubiquitous power that Facebook once wielded over social networking is steadily receding. •

Graphic by Rochelle O'Brien



Courtesy of Wallace Haith
Colton George Haith
January 31, 2015
Father: Wallace Haith

Wilson Tiny Tigers Club



Courtesy of Mary Lambert
Hayes Stockton Lambert
March 4, 2015
Mother: Mary Lambert



Courtesy of William Haith
Olivia Kennedy Haith
October 2, 2014
Father: William Haith



Courtesy of Seneca Surles
Aaliya Sevyn Surles
December 30, 2014
Father: Seneca Surles

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My Life So Far: Zetis Nguyen

Abby Tanen
Staff Writer

From jazz to heavy metal to Top 40 pop, junior Zetis Nguyen really has tried every genre of music. Comparing himself to The Beatles due to their many stylistic changes, Nguyen has had a musical life. He began his journey at the age of eight playing the drums in a jazz band called The Saints, often performing at places he described as “lame,” also known as the Kennedy Center and the Hilton.

When the jazz wasn’t jazzy enough, he ventured out into new territories. After hearing the song “Knives and Pens” by Black Veil Brides on YouTube in sixth grade, Nguyen became hooked on heavy metal. He and fellow junior Frankie Edwards began a metal band. Edwards was in charge of the vocals and Nguyen, everything else. His instrumental talents include bass, guitar, and drums.

Edwards and Nguyen were a little indecisive about the name of their band. “It was called a bunch of different names... From Me To You, Cool Kids,

House Party, etc.,” Nguyen said. Besides debating the name of the band, the two metal-heads ran into other complications. Nguyen wants a life and a career in music: music “till I die,” he announced.

His fellow band member, although interested in music, didn’t share the intensity of Nguyen’s passion. So, like every good band, they broke up.

Last year, junior Jonah Garland (Edwards’s and Nguyen’s former band manager) and

Nguyen formed a new band, which is just as indecisive about their name. Currently, they are called Sock Puppet Theatre, but during their interview they did briefly converse about changing the name to Robot Police, so

stay posted for band name updates.

Nguyen told me that with his new band, his sound has evolved. He says that heavy metal is an ‘acquired taste’ and



Photo by Luc Nikiema

RENAISSANCE MAN - Junior Zetis Nguyen spends his days practicing various musical genres, though his ideal situation is to be in a boy band. Nguyen’s current band is called Sock Puppet Theatre, which dabbles in pop music, though prior to this he played heavy metal.

he now plays more pop music, in the interest of reaching out to a larger fan base. In fact, he’s interested in amassing a huge fan base. “Being a boy band is ideal,” Nguyen admitted.

Nguyen, adorned in a black

beanie and ear gauges, might come across as more Kiss than Ed Sheeran but the musician told me pop is his calling. “I would definitely join One Direction,” Nguyen said. “I like Harry Styles.”

For him, pop lyrics are more interesting to write than heavy metal. As a lyricist, Nguyen will only write about events or feelings he has personally experienced. “I can’t write a song if I’m forcing it,” he said. And his band will never do a cover. If

it’s not him, it’s not happening. “Covers are a no-no.” Nguyen phrased the motto ever so eloquently.

Nguyen himself does not indulge in American pop music. He listens to classic rock, Japanese pop, Japanese and American indie music, and metal. His taste in music falls all over the spectrum.

Garland and Nguyen are

hoping that they can get on iTunes, but in the meantime their songs can be found on SoundCloud, under the name Sock Puppet Theatre. If you’re wondering, “the name has no meaning.”

Nguyen says that his parents are supportive of his musical aspirations and even let him record in his room. “We do most of the recording on GarageBand,” he says.

While the Nguyen family support is important, it’s important that Wilson supports its musicians as well. Sock Puppet Theatre will be playing their first gig on Saturday, March 28, opening for Bucky’s Fatal Mistake, another band featuring Wilson students, at Haydee’s Restaurant in Mt. Pleasant. While this is not a paying gig, Nguyen and Garland are really excited to get up on stage. Plus they get free food, which is payment enough. So scholars, if you’re looking for good music, good food, and a good time, drop by for Sock Puppet Theatre’s debut performance. •

Female Enrollment Struggles in STEM Field Courses

Ella Feldman
Junior Editor

“Math class is tough!” said the Teen Talk Barbie, released by Mattel in 1992, along with phrases like “I love shopping!” and “Will we ever have enough clothes?” The dolls were made to say four of a total of 270 phrases like these, so only about 1.5 percent of the Barbies complained about math. However, Mattel was criticized for the phrase, and later that year revoked the sale of all dolls programmed to say it.

Although many studies have found that boys dominate test scores in these subjects, performance cannot be equated to potential. There is no neurologic evidence that girls’ brains make them innately less capable than boys to do well in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) classes. However, the disparity between the number of boys and girls in STEM fields remains.

Studies have found that females in high schools in the U.S. are more likely to take biology, while males will take physics and engineering. In one Wilson engineering class, only one of thirty students is female. “That’s the worst it’s been in my six years of teaching,” says science teacher Patrick O’Steen. He speculates that girls may be intimidated by the male domination. “It’s uncomfortable to enter a situation where you’re already the minority.”

Girls taking math-related

science classes at Wilson also expressed that they feel pressure because of their gender. “I do feel the need to prove myself, and in a way show that girls can do just as well as boys can in science and math,” says senior Margaret Kellogg, who plans to major in a STEM-related field in college.

Engineering teacher Angela Benjamin says that she has faced sexism throughout her career. She once took an engineering course through Project Lead the Way, a non-profit STEM organization, and was the only woman and African-American in the class. When put into a group for a specific assignment, her ideas were disregarded. “All I did was act as a secretary,” she says.

Junior Julie Rakas, who is enrolled in an engineering class, recalls a similar experience. In a summer robotics job, she was placed into a group with all boys. “At first I was sort of stuck with the jobs no one else wanted.”

Neither Benjamin nor Rakas let experiences like these get to them, but this may be part of the reason that so many girls drift away from engineering courses. “You have to be willing to be the only female,” says Benjamin. It seems that a lot of girls aren’t.

However, women are not a minority in all areas of STEM. Girls are the national majority in advanced biology courses in high school; in this year’s AP Biology class at Wilson, 18 out of 22 students are female. A study conducted by psychologists

found that more than half of PhDs in social and life sciences are awarded to women. But the study also found that on average, it is harder for a woman to receive tenure in psychology and biology than it is for their male counterparts, and when they do, they are paid less.

Interestingly, the study found no trends of women experiencing gender discrimination in most of the math-related sciences. More female undergraduates also choose not to pursue PhDs or tenure-track jobs in biological sciences than they do in math-related sciences.

According to these trends, women are more successful in the long run if they choose to pursue math-related sciences rather than other science fields.

Yet women are still discouraged from pursuing jobs in these sciences because of a lack of female peers. Many think the solution to this disparity is to guide girls towards math-related sciences at younger ages.

AP Biology teacher Jessie Poole believes the solution will require a large-scale response. “I believe the true solution to this problem is educating and informing everyone of the inequalities that exist between men and women,” she says. “Once this takes priority, people will begin to become aware of how the media and other outlets are swaying their perception of women.”

“To encourage more girls to take STEM classes, parents and

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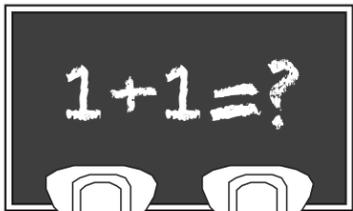
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teachers need to encourage girls and let them know that they are more than capable of excelling in all fields,” says Kellogg. “Women possess so much untapped

talent. Imagine what the world would be like if women didn’t feel the need to shy away from science and math.” •

THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP



THE DISCREPANCY BETWEEN WHITE STUDENTS AND STUDENTS OF COLOR THAT PLAGUES WILSON

By Nora Charles

An achievement gap is a disparity in academic performance between groups. This can refer to gaps in achievement by gender, family income, or race, among other things. A student's academic performance is measured by his or her standardized test scores, grades, the rigor of classes, graduation rates, and college completion rates.

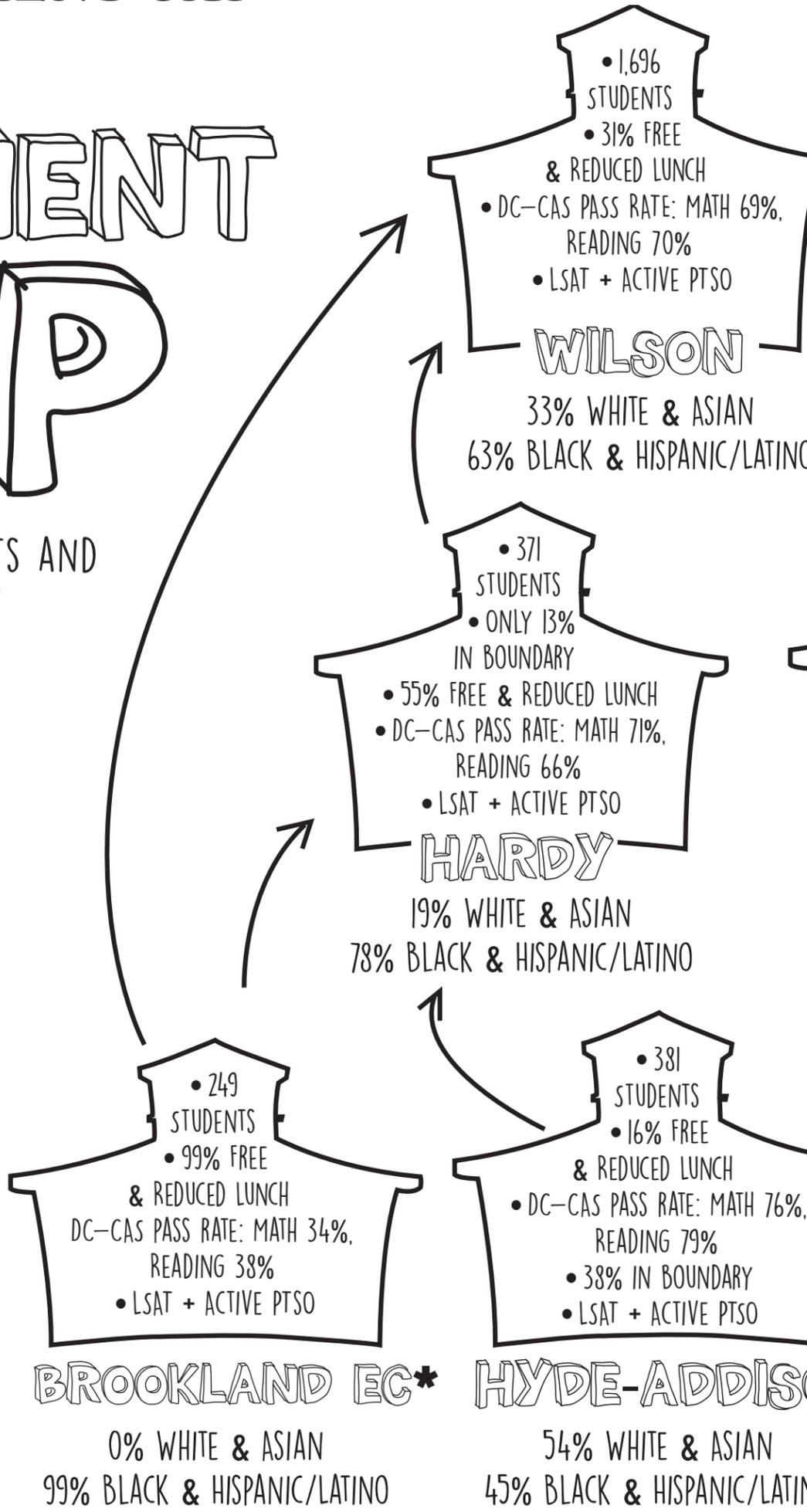
According to the Education Commission of the States (ECS), the average black or Hispanic high school student in the US performs comparably to the lowest quartile of white students. Students of color are also more likely to drop out of high school.

A student's parents' income and education level are critical factors in determining a student's achievement. Unconscious biases can also affect a teacher's expectations of minority students, which in turn can impact their performance to a surprising degree.

Some researchers call it an "opportunity gap" because a student's achievement correlates very closely with access to resources. In our school, city, and country the majority of people who can afford opportunities, such as tutors, are white. In 2014, the income of the richest five percent of residents is 54 times what that of the poorest 20 percent.

In 2001, the federal government targeted the issue by passing the No Child Left Behind Act, which has raised awareness around achievement gaps. It has spawned federal programs and interventions across the country, although many argue that the act has not been successful in helping low-performing schools. In January the "Empowering Males of Color" initiative took effect in DC to improve colored male achievement through mentoring, grants, and college preparation. Mayor Muriel Bowser plans to open a new college prep high school in Anacostia for minority males by 2017.

As DC has gentrified in the past 20 years, DCPS's student population has become increasingly white and wealthy. While standardized test scores for DCPS have improved overall, the achievement gap between whites and minorities has widened.



*Note: Brookland EC is not a feeder school to Wilson. Wilson stopped accepting out of boundary students in the second year in the new building, but many students who currently attend Wilson live out of boundary and end up at Wilson through the feeder right they receive by attending Hardy, which is a feeder school to Wilson.

AP CLASSES DISPLAY RACIAL DIVIDE AT WILSON

CONT. FROM PG 1

Even with the introduction of the AP system in the mid-1970s, which gave students and their parents the choice of whether to take advanced or on-level classes, classes remained divided.

Jennifer McLaughlin, an English teacher of both on-level and AP classes, notices: "My AP classes are mostly predominantly white, while both of my on-level classes are predominantly black."

Junior Sean Wright has also noticed. "Sometimes I look up and think, am I really the only black kid?" said Wright, who takes AP Chemistry.

Behind this segregation lies a major social factor. The lack

of racial diversity that exists in these classes can be intimidating for many students.

"Being the only student of color [in a class] is pretty f***** scary," senior Alexis Primus said.

"It's really difficult to enter a space where you don't really know anyone," McLaughlin said. "It's hard enough to deal with the academic side, but adding the social stress is something that many teenagers, and people in general, would want to avoid."

Michael Jones is a junior who takes AP US history. "In AP classes, all the white kids talk," he said. "Some black kids assimilate into the white groups, but mostly it's just white kids talking."

A student's willingness to enroll in a higher level class

depends on the amount of support they receive from friends and family. Kids of higher socioeconomic status are more likely to receive this support and resources like AP study books and tutors that make it easier to succeed. In DC, only five percent of whites live under the poverty line, compared to 36 percent of blacks.

Senior Madison Summers, one of two black students in BC Calculus, encourages everyone to challenge themselves to take an AP class. "Of course it is a little intimidating on the first day when you walk in and you're like, woah, I'm the only colored crayon," she said. "Unfortunately that's how the world we live in is right now. But I highly

recommend students of color to PLEASE try calculus. So many of us can do it, especially if I can."

Administrators at Wilson are taking steps to make AP classes more diverse. Assistant principal Tennille Bowser has spearheaded the new Minorities in AP (MAP) program, which will organize mentoring for black and Hispanic students in AP next year in order to improve minority enrollment and performance. "We will focus on 30 or so students and support them through their classes," Bowser said. "We hope to see a 20 percent increase [in minority AP enrollment] within the first year."

In the past several years, DCPS has come under fire for this issue, especially since

2011 national testing data revealed that DC had the biggest achievement gap in the country.

"This is a huge issue beyond Wilson, beyond DC, beyond the United States. But we have to start somewhere, and Wilson is a good place to start because we have such a diverse population," said McLaughlin. "As a Wilson family, we all have to take responsibility for something that we see as a disparity."

See "Wilson Representatives Brief Congress About AP Affordability" on page 1 to read about how the Wilson community is fighting to keep APs accessible to all.

Graphic by Jane Martin

WILSON STATS

Part of the achievement gap stems from disparity in resources. It is clear from the statistics shown that within DCPS there is a correlation between race, social class and performance on tests like DC-CAS, because students at schools outside of Wilson's boundaries often have access to fewer facilities and less support, among other factors. See Kellik Dawson's story "We Are Not All Alike" on page 1 to see how a Wilson student has experienced such disparity.

DEAL

- 1,248 STUDENTS
- 21% FREE & REDUCED LUNCH
- DC-CAS PASS RATE: MATH 88%, READING 84%
- LSAT + ACTIVE PTSO

49% WHITE & ASIAN
45% BLACK & HISPANIC/LATINO

LAFAYETTE

- 689 STUDENTS
- 7% FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH
- DC-CAS PASS RATE: MATH 91%, READING 88%
- LSAT + ACTIVE PTSO

76% WHITE & ASIAN
17% BLACK & HISPANIC/LATINO

"I think that the achievement gap stems from our social system overall and I feel like there are so many needs that aren't being met in the houses of students that come from families where there might not be much support at home because parents are trying to make ends meet by working 2 or 3 jobs. Its a system that's bigger than just what we can do at Wilson." - **Julie Gloss, Spanish Teacher**

"It's bulls***...the white people here are exposed to more things than the black kids are. Like we come from Southeast and some parts of Northeast and we don't get the same opportunities that white people have up here." - **Jonathan Morris, 12th**

boundary students after the 2012-2013 school year, the t of boundary (46%). However, many out of boundary ere 87% of students are out of boundary.

WILSON VOICES

"Some kids come from middle school and don't have the same education as other kids. It's separated by what school they come from. I don't think [the achievement gap at Wilson] is as big as other schools, but I think it exists in a way. [It hasn't really affected me because] When I first came here, Ms. Cacamise was on me so I had to take all of her classes." - **Nick Cooper, 12th**

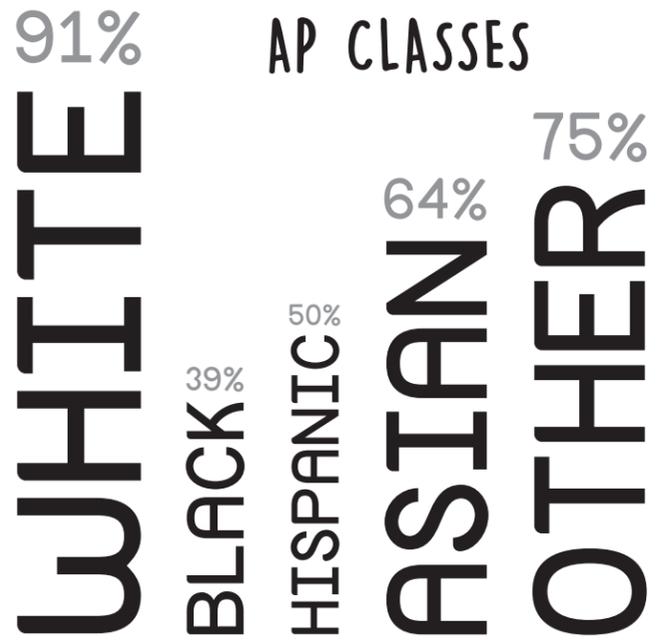
"Going into settings like AP World [History] classes...you feel like you can't do what you want to do because you are black. It's a majority white class and you go in there and you feel uncomfortable because you don't feel included in the classroom." - **Jordan Wheeler, 10th**

"The achievement gap is just everywhere I mean it does exist but sometimes I guess you can feel like Wilson has two different schools inside itself. Like if you're really trying to do what you're trying to do Wilson is the school for you but if you're not really tryna do nothing either Wilson is also kind of a school for that too." - **Jonathan James, 12th**

AVERAGE GPA FOR 2014



PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS TAKING ONE OR MORE HONORS OR AP CLASSES



AVERAGE GPAS FOR STUDENTS TAKING AP COURSES





Photo by Tara Bretzfelder

LOOK UP! - Freshman students occupy themselves with their various types of phones during STEP. The average 18 to 24 year old smartphone user sends more than 2,000 texts a month.

Students Talk Phones

Jane Angel
Maria Brescia-Weiler
Contributor
Features Editor

Wilson students seem to fit right in with the subjects of an Experian study finding that U.S. smartphone owners between the ages of 18 and 24 send an average of 2,022 texts a month, or about 67 texts a day. Students who have touchscreen phones use them every day for things like social media, music, and games. Before this, many used flip phones. Freshman Meirav Steinlauf says of her time with a flip phone, "It was a lot worse; I couldn't set an alarm or keep track of my schedule."

Senior Paul Rock agrees that, with a smartphone, "it's easier to contact people." Before, he says, "it was kind of hit or miss whether I would be able to contact people."

Nonetheless, Rock never thought he would see the day when he got an iPhone. But that was a year ago and he is still hesitant to convert to the smartphone lifestyle. "You don't need them, they're stupid and they take up too much of your life, but once you have one you can't go back."

For the most part, Rock seems unchanged by his new gadget. He still isn't on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. He believes that texting should be used for logistics only, and any important conversation merits actual talking. But having a smartphone has revolutionized the way he travels and passes time. "I never have to figure out how to get

places," he says.

And "the minute I sit in a doctor's office, my first instinct is to do this"—he pulls out his phone—"and look at sports updates or Bleacher Report or something." Before having an iPhone, he remembers, "I just twiddled my thumbs and thought about stuff."

Generally, students with touchscreen phones seem to think that they are better connected to people. Freshman Naejea Piper says she feels she has better access to people who are far away. But Rock doesn't believe his iPhone has strengthened his relationships. "If anything, it's weakened them," he says, "because there's less emphasis on when we're actually together."

Freshman Cooper Tolbertsmith says that he is still very social without a phone: he contacts people without a home phone or his iPad. Freshman May McLaughlin agrees that it would be easier to socialize if she had a phone, but that her communications would be the same, because she would be the same person.

Although most people prefer touchscreens to flip phones, freshman Hannah Schuster thinks that while her iPhone is good to have, it can also distract her and distance her from people. She says that her phone holds a lot of power.

"There are advantages," Rock admits, "but I wish everyone would just go back. It's kinda like you have to have one because everyone else does, but I wish no one had one." •

Wilson conspiracy theories

By Ellie Melick

I don't think many people know this about me, but I dabble quite intensely in the art of conspiracy theorizing. I'm well acquainted with the sketchiness surrounding JFK's assassination, and you can bet your grandmama's cat that I know what Benedict Cumberbatch really is. But besides investigating those more mainstream theories, I have also been able to come up with a few of my own, pertaining directly to our lives here at Wilson. Here are five Wilson conspiracy theories I'm convinced are true, complete with undeniable evidence for each one.

1 MS. WAITS AND ARIANA GRANDE ARE THE EXACT SAME PERSON

EVIDENCE: Listen to these lyrics: "Head in the clouds/got no WAITS on my shoulders." Coincidence? NOPE.

2 ALL OF THE TEACHERS ARE ALIENS FROM A FAR-OFF GALAXY, SENT TO EARTH TO BRAINWASH THE MINDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE INTO WORSHIPPING THEIR ALIEN LORD

EVIDENCE: Let me ask you this: Have you ever seen your teachers' bellybuttons? No? Well guess what: **THEY DON'T HAVE THEM, BECAUSE THEY'RE ALIENS.**

3 WISP SECRETLY STANDS FOR WILSON ILLUMINATI SUPPORTERS PROGRAM

EVIDENCE: If you were to draw points on the heads of Ms. Caccamise, Ms. Boateng, and Mr. Heckler, then connect them all with string, you would get a **TRIANGLE. THERE'S NO DENYING THAT.**

4 MR. BARGEMAN IS A 1,000 YEAR-OLD FROG, HARVESTING THE SALTINESS OF HALL-SWEPT STUDENTS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A HUMAN FORM

EVIDENCE: Why do you think Bargeman cares so much about hall sweeps? Why do you think his voice is so deep? I'll tell you why: it's because he's secretly a frog, and he uses students' saltiness in a potion that makes him look like a Wilson administrator!!!

5 THE SECURITY GUARDS ARE ALL JUST A BUNCH OF SQUIRRELS IN LONG TRENCHCOATS

EVIDENCE: Just trust me on this one, guys. Trust me. •

Story Time With Ms. Ramos

Maria Brescia-Weiler
Features Editor

Molly Ramos (formerly Hughes) was 15 and excited to be spending the Fourth of July at a mountain cabin with her family and family friends. She was even more excited when she discovered that her family friends had dirt bikes.

"At this point in my life I was a pretty big daredevil," Ramos says. Her brother Tim was 18 and very put together. He was well behaved, got good grades and never missed his curfew, "so we were kinda opposites."

Molly and Tim were given a tutorial on how to ride the dirt bikes and warned several times not to get out of second gear.

The cabin was at the top of a Christmas tree farm and the only trails to dirt bike on zigzagged through rows of trees and looped around back to the top of the mountain.

After some time biking, Molly and Tim decided to go on one last run. Tim was coming out of the top of the trail and Ramos was going into it when he waved at her. "My brother, being so good and mild-mannered, didn't even need to be on second gear, he was going so slowly."

The same could not be said of Ramos. When she waved back, her bike "stopped on a dime" and she flew over the handlebars, landed two feet away from the bike and felt her arms snap as she watched her brother reach the top of the

mountain on what she knew was his last run. He wasn't coming back.

"There were a ton of people with us," says Ramos, "so I didn't think anyone would notice that I was gone, which was confirmed as I lay in the valley for 45 minutes."

Without the use of her arms, she lay on the ground struggling to stand up. "I tried to get the helmet off but both of my arms were broken," she says. "I was shaking my head and biting at the strap."

Finally, someone noticed one of the bikes was missing and a dad went down to look for it. "He was like 'Hey, what's happening down here?'" and I was like, "Mr. Ford, both of my arms are broken!"

Mr. Ford brought Ramos's father down, and they loaded Molly up in his truck and drove her to a podunk hospital, "like, the size of this classroom," where her father was sent to the snack lounge to get bags of ice. At the hospital, they set both of Ramos's arms and put her in casts.

The next day, back home in Winston-Salem, N.C., her parents took her to another orthopedic doctor who had to re-break both of her arms and put her in casts that went above her elbows.

Having two broken arms proved to be quite useful for family trips. Three weeks later she was at the beach with a boogie board laid over both of her arms like a shelf, with her

parents loading her up with a cooler and beach equipment. But the indomitable Molly Hughes wanted to swim. To swim, she had to wear arm condoms, airtight rubber covers that went up above her casts and sealed around her shoulders, filling with air so that her arms resembled large balloons. She had to pull her boogie board down to the water with her teeth.

At the end of the summer, after about seven weeks, Molly got her casts removed. "I looked like I was wearing white evening gloves," she remembers.

"And one final salient detail," she adds. "I broke each arm again within three months." •

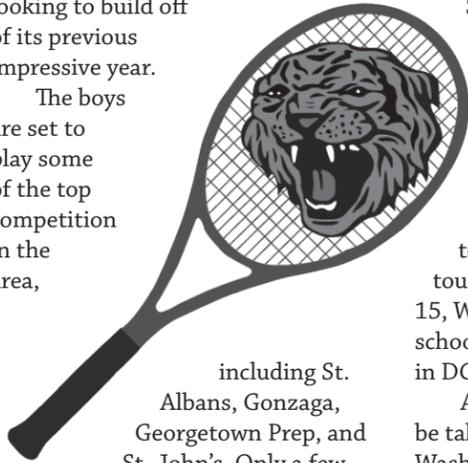
Tennis Team Takes it to the Courts

Isaac Frumkin
Junior Editor

Nothing says spring like walking by the Fort Reno tennis courts and noticing Wilson athletes competing and practicing with their teammates, and tennis balls...everywhere. This familiar sight has returned, and the tennis teams are gearing up for an exciting season.

Coming off a DCIAA championship victory in 2014, the boys varsity tennis team is looking to build off of its previous impressive year.

The boys are set to play some of the top competition in the area,



including St. Albans, Gonzaga, Georgetown Prep, and St. John's. Only a few years ago, however, the schedule lacked quality and, more importantly, games to play. Senior Merf Finney recalls that when he started playing for Wilson as a freshman, "The competition was non-existent. We exclusively played kids from other public schools who seemed to never have touched a racket in their life."

"Now with a new and improved team," Finney says, "we also have a full schedule and the program is on track to being extremely successful." The team received a big boost when current captain Mo Ismail - who took the DC circuit by storm, winning the DCIAA singles title -

arrived at Wilson last year.

Ismail, who moved last year from Egypt, has been playing tennis since he was 11. He learned the sport from his grandfather and his mother, who was Egypt's top woman player at one point. Like Ismail, fellow senior Finney grew up in a culture that bred tennis. His father is a former professional tennis player and his older brother, Sean, captured the DCIAA singles title in 2012.

These two as well as the other seniors on the team, Henry Shuldiner and Ian Dragulet, are on their way to lead the tennis team to another impressive year. In addition to the DCIAA City Championship at the end of the season, DCSAA (DC State Athletic Association) is holding its inaugural tennis championship. In this tournament, taking place May 11-15, Wilson will face not only DCPS schools, but the top private schools in DC.

According to Ismail, who will be taking his talents to George Washington University next year, these two championships will definitely be "the highlights of the season."

Losing the seniors after the season will certainly be a big loss but it should not affect the progress the tennis program has made. It seems that people at Wilson have begun to realize that playing tennis has benefits that go beyond winning trophies or championships. As Finney puts it, "The beauty of tennis is that it is a lifelong sport. It's a game you can play for the rest of your life until you are old and senile...I will always be down to hit [tennis balls]." •

Graphic by Jane Martin

GIRLS VARSITY LACROSSE



Photos by Tony Smole



The girls varsity lacrosse team lost 11-9 in a close game vs. Bishop McNamara on March 17. Senior Suzy Carnevali-Doan scored a hat trick. Other goal scorers included seniors May Albee and Sarah Marion "We played an awesome game and everyone was intense and into the game," commented Carnevali-Doan. "The team is really starting to work as one unit." The team also had a tough weekend following the disappointing loss to McNamara, losing two games in the Atomic Blast Tournament in Annandale.

With tough opponents ahead in the schedule, including Sidwell, St. Maria Gorieta, and GDS, the team looks to be resilient and turn their season in the right direction. The team is scheduled to play Bishop McNamara again April 30. "We hope to beat these guys next time," added Carnevali-Doan. •

By Jake Radack

SPORTS OPINION

College Basketball is Better than Professional

Matthew Smee
Web Sports Editor

As I watched the second quarter of an NBA game a couple weeks ago, I had an epiphany. It was Trail Blazers-Spurs, two of the better teams in the association. The Blazers led their division and boasted the fourth best record in the league, and the Spurs had one of the most accomplished veteran squads in the history of the league. All fingers pointed to this being an exciting matchup, yet the game could not have been more boring.

For a stretch of about five minutes, I watched warily as each team ran their offense through one player. Tim Duncan of the Spurs was 5-5 from the field, and Lamarus Aldridge of the Blazers was 6-6.

I was beginning to lose interest in the game, so I flipped channels to watch some college basketball highlights. Earlier that day, 22nd ranked-VCU was upset by unranked Richmond in double overtime. The night before, unranked Syracuse

defeated eighth-seed Notre Dame by five. This wasn't a surprise. I've been watching college basketball for many years and have come to know the game's tendency to have many upsets. But as I watched these highlights, it occurred to me that college basketball could be better than its professional counterpart.

First, the fans at college games are infinitely better than fans at pro games. The typical crowd at an NBA game consists of couples on dates, father-son duos, and old businesspeople with company box seats. The level of excitement achievable by fans of this demographic speaks for itself.

The fans at college games provide a sharp contrast. While the groups mentioned above may still exist in smaller doses, the predominant fan demographic is young college kids, either very intoxicated or just genuinely excited about their school. From painted chests to crazy wigs, fans at college games provide the whole nine yards and make for a much

more exciting atmosphere.

As for the competition, college ball, again, is superior. In the NBA, there is a great divide between the good teams and the bad teams. In college, with the exception of powerhouse schools such as Kentucky or Duke, most games come down to the wire. When an upset is pulled off, it's a much bigger deal than in the pros: in the NBA, a loss is one of 82 games, during which everything eventually evens out, while in college games, the gravity of one loss can drastically impact a team's season.

My theory is that college players have more tenacity than professionals. Most college players know they won't go pro, so they leave everything on the court. Teams are always playing up to their opponent's level, which leads to more shocking outcomes. Professional, on the other hand, can be seen phoning it in frequently. This is one of the biggest complaints about pro basketball: nobody tries. Many players who have already made it big relax for a lot of the regular season, waiting for the playoffs

to actually pick it up.

The playoffs are one of the biggest reasons college basketball is better than pro basketball. The college equivalent of playoffs is the NCAA March Madness Basketball Tournament. One loss and you're out. In the pros, the seven-game series approach rarely allows for upsets, as a lower-seeded team can get a win or two in a series but lose overall. On the one hand, this rewards the teams that are actually better, but it creates little diversity among the winners. Since 1999 there have been six different winners of the NBA finals: six teams sharing the title over 16 years. The predictability of the sport makes it less enjoyable.

The impact of the level of NBA players translates into the officiating. Refs in the pros never make basic calls such as traveling because it's assumed that these top notch players know better than to break the simple rules. The amount of traveling that goes uncalled in the pros is crazy and doesn't

happen in college. Furthermore, refs develop extreme biases to certain players. We've seen this in "Jordan Rules," where refs favored Michael Jordan. I see the same thing happen with LeBron James. In college, no player is esteemed enough for this to apply, making the game as a whole, better-officiated.

Don't get me wrong, I thoroughly enjoy watching the NBA and there are exceptions to every statement I've made. From the whiteout nights at Heat games to the explosiveness of players like Russell Westbrook, there are still moments of excitement. I simply believe that college basketball has more of these moments and am, thus, siding with it indefinitely. Whatever your opinion, with the NCAA tournament underway and the NBA season coming to a close, basketball fans everywhere will agree that the coming weeks of hoops are going to be awesome. •

Wilson Track is Just a Little Short



Photo by Tony Smole

JUST SHY - The Wilson track is 58 meters shorter than the regulation length of 400m. This has added an unnecessary amount of mental math for runners and coaches who use the track.

Erin Doherty
Sports Editor

Three hundred-forty-two meters. Not 400, not 300, but exactly 342 meters. This is the length of the Wilson outdoor track. It may be the only 342 meter track in the world.

For runners, the 342-meter track requires some accommodation. A "400," or 400 meters, is a popular distance and one lap around most tracks. Not at Wilson: to run 400, one must run a lap, plus 58 meters. This irregularity affects longer distances as well: a 1600, the closest thing to a mile in track, requires running four and a half laps around Wilson's track rather than the usual four.

Wilson's track and field, like Wilson, have changed over time. It is hard to imagine now, but for years Wilson's football and baseball teams both played on the same grass field, according to David Thompson, a Wilson alum and instructional coach. Running around the Wilson track could be dangerous, so the school implemented a backstop to prevent flying baseballs from hitting runners.

The track itself was cinder, not much better than dirt. Runners were unable to practice in spikes. "It was dangerous because its rundown condition prevented good traction," wrote Cathy Reilly, co-founder of the Senior High Alliance of Parents, Principals, and Educators, in "The Story of the Renovation of the Wilson Senior High School Running Track," published in 2000.

In 1997, Wilson representatives, DCPS, and the Army Corp of Engineers began the process to renovate the track. A proposal funded by the DC Sports Commission granted Wilson \$50,000, and DCPS provided another \$5,000. By October of 2000, after three years of planning, renovating, and a summer of painting and redesigning, the cinder track was officially redone with an asphalt

surface. The length, however, was still less than regulation size.

At this point, a discussion about extending the track led to a survey to "determine if there was any way the track could be enlarged to a full quarter mile," Reilly, a key member of the track renovation committee, wrote. In order to enlarge it, the bleachers and rear parking lot would have had to be demolished. "It wasn't a small job," Reilly said in an interview.

Former Athletic Director Eddie Saah said that, while he supported the track's extension, "it wasn't in the plans." The track could have been expanded to regulation length, he said, "if people pushed for it." Evidently, not enough people pushed for it.

Even after the renovation of the track, members of the renovation committee were disappointed. "It's sad," said Reilly. "A school this big deserves a regulation size track."

Ten years after the implementation of the asphalt track, Saah decided that the constant maintenance for the grass football field was becoming too expensive and burdensome. In 2010, the grass field became artificial turf. The asphalt track became a Mondo surface track, the surface it is today.

Despite the need for accommodations among runners, the track has had a tradition that embodies Wilson's unique character. At one time, the varsity soccer team would practice on the football field and members of the track or cross country teams would be using the track, while the football team would be in study hall until the soccer teams finished. The track and field, like the rest of Wilson, has required compromise among the wide range of needs and interests.

Today, unfit runners can thank Wilson because a lap is a little shorter and easier. And who knows, maybe a Wilson student can someday set a record in the "342." •

Wilson Alum Advances to Spring Training

Isaac Frumkin
Junior Editor

Since Emmanuel Burriss graduated from Wilson, DC baseball fans and Wilson alumni have been waiting for an opportunity like this. Emmanuel Burriss is back in DC, but this spring he won't be playing for the Wilson baseball team. Burriss, the only professional baseball player to come out of Wilson, was invited to the Washington Nationals spring training for the second year in a row. Already having survived four roster cuts, he's inching closer to securing a spot on the Nationals.

A graduate of Wilson's class of 2003, Burriss has been steadily making a name for himself in the world of baseball. In high school, Burriss made the varsity team every year and led the Tigers to their eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh consecutive city championships (the streak is still alive at 22).

At Wilson, Burriss was a multi-faceted player. He could bat from both the right and left sides and was an outstanding fielder, and his Wilson coaches remember him as a coachable player. Current Wilson assistant coach and former head junior varsity coach, Shellie Bowers, Jr., remembers, "Emmanuel was an extremely versatile player and at some point played just about every position for us."

What stood out to most was his speed. "Emmanuel was gone, before I could even say go," says varsity head coach Eddie Saah. Saah remembers time after time, "If he was on first base... he wouldn't be for long." Saah, who led Wilson baseball to 16 consecutive DCIAA titles and also served as Wilson's athletic director, labels Burriss "the best athlete I've ever seen."

Although Bowers was the head JV coach while Burriss was at Wilson, he never directly coached Burriss. "Coach Saah never let us touch him," Bowers recalls. "He was on the varsity team as soon as he came to

Wilson."

"He was keen on coming to Wilson," Saah adds, although he could have attended a number of prestigious private schools. At the time, Wilson was not known for having the best athletic facilities or programs. The baseball team practiced on the football field before the field was turf, and the track was still cement.

Burriss, however, was unfazed. While it seems as though someone with his caliber of talent might slack off, Burriss was serious about his game. "He always wanted to take more ground balls," Saah recalls; "after practice he would ask me if I could hit him some more balls."

While DC has always fostered an environment where most kids immediately take to basketball and football, Burriss stuck with baseball. Being the outstanding athlete that he was, Burriss excelled in basketball, but ultimately gave it up for baseball.

"He was the best athlete in the school," Saah was quick to mention. "He could have been the quarterback for the football team." Baseball scouts rarely came to DC, or other big urban cities, because they were under the impression that if a kid was good at baseball and basketball, that kid loved basketball more. Burriss wanted to show scouts that he was entirely committed to baseball, and if that meant giving up other sports, so be it.

Burriss attended Kent State University, where he was a big hit. In three years at Kent State, he totaled 92 stolen bases (a Kent State record) and held a batting average of .360 his junior year in 2006. That year, Burriss was named his conference's Player of the Year in addition to earning All-American honors. After that, Burriss declared for the MLB draft.

Not only had Wilson not turned out any professional baseball players, DCPS in general was far from a baseball powerhouse. The last time a

DCPS product had played in a MLB game: 1970. To put that in perspective, in 1970 Richard Nixon was president, Washington, DC had not yet elected its first mayor, and DC was home to a different baseball team, the Washington Senators.

The Senators left town the following year and so did DC's hopes of having one of its own in the major leagues. In 2005, DC finally got a new team, the Nationals. And along with the Nationals, a few years later we finally witnessed a DC native crack the big leagues.

On April 20, 2008, Burriss ended the 38-year drought of DCPS products in the MLB. After being drafted in the first round of the 2006 MLB draft by the San Francisco Giants, Burriss quickly moved up through the minor leagues. While in the majors, Burriss proved his versatility by playing at every position except for pitcher and catcher. While with the Giants, Burriss earned two World Series rings in 2010 and 2012.

Since the 2012 season, Burriss has been out of the major leagues. The Nats signed him to a minor league contract before the 2014 season, and were impressed enough by his performance to invite him back to Spring Training this year, as they did last year. With his son living in DC and the Nationals lacking depth at the second base position, this seems to be a perfect time for Burriss to break back into the majors. Burriss's offseason trainer and longtime friend, Jared Williams, believes Burriss is "in the best shape of his life."

Burriss knows a lot of people here in DC, and Saah is already planning for Burriss's debut with the Nationals. "All his buddies would come, his mother and father and their friends, people that used to play with him, Kathy, my wife..." Come the Nats opener on April 6, if Burriss is in the dugout, the Nats will find a lot more people interested in buying tickets. •

Tomorrow marks the inaugural Tenley Tiger Run. This year the track booster club partnered with the PTSO to plan an event to get funding for the track team. With help and support from local businesses and parents, the fundraiser became a reality for the track team. Modeled after the lucrative Janney 5K, the overall goal is to raise money for team travel, apparel, and equipment.

Math teacher and assistant track coach Jacqueline Beliveau hopes to raise "five to 10 thousand dollars" and have "at least 500 people registered." To attract people to register, runners on the track team all went to local businesses to sell their pitch. Each group of track athletes was

responsible for getting 10 people to register for the race.

The race will consist of a 5K and a 2.5K race. Runners will begin the race at the Chesapeake Street entrance of Wilson, and do either one or two loops around the neighborhood depending on whether they want to run the 5K or the 2.5K. With over 100 kids in the track program, there will hopefully be a good turnout.

The cost of registering is \$30 per person, and runners can register the day of the event. There will also be a stand in the atrium today at STEP and after school for those students and faculty who would like to register. Good luck Tigers! •

By Henry Shuldiner



Graphic by Franklin Webber

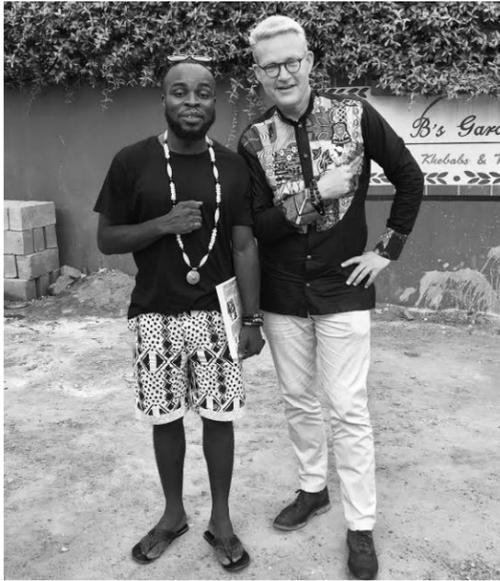
Watch Wilson students and staff bust a move in the halls on thewilsonbeacon.com

Ghana's Got Style

Ellice Ellis
Junior Editor

Although they'll never admit it, Ghanaians love to look their best.

Custom-made clothing – what the French call haute



AFRICAN FASHION - Traditional African clothing remains popular among Ghanaians, though their fashion extends beyond that. Ghana's fashion culture is up-and-coming, as local designers are becoming more well-known.

couture – is popular among almost all Ghanaians. Men and women constantly take fabric to local seamstresses, dressmakers, and tailors, and have clothes for all occasions sewn to fit them perfectly.

Although traditional African styles are still popular among Ghanaians, the youth of Ghana use changing styles and trends to transform their signature African wax print cloths into everything from skin-tight party dresses to crop tops to suit separates. Many Ghanaians frequent “Woodin,” an African fabric and

Photo by Ellice Ellis

ready-to-wear fashion design house, and local textile markets, such as Makola Market in Accra, for their wax print or kente-style cloth.

Although Ghana may be behind the Western world when it comes to the fashion industry, the country is an emerging fashion, arts and style hub. GLITZ Africa Fashion Week, which showcases African designers and student designers-in-training, is hosted in Ghana and is just as vibrant and stylish as New York, Milan or London's fashion week.

Ghana even has its very own Christian Louboutin: Tonyi Senayah, who founded Horseman Shoes in 2010. The company specializes in custom-made loafers and flats that have been worn by African celebrities, politicians and even the president of Ghana himself.

With emerging designers, lively fabrics, and bespoke clothing all around, what style enthusiast wouldn't want to visit Ghana? •

Bucky's Fatal Mistake Rocks and Rolls Across the DMV

Carolina Bayon
Staff Writer

Junior Charlie Steinman may be known for his really cool beard, but apart from managing his beard, he's also managing his band, Bucky's Fatal Mistake. The only band member who goes to Wilson is Charlie. The band's members are Chris Jones on guitar, Eleanor Linafelt on bass, Mike Williams on drums, and Steinman on guitar and vocals.

Bucky's Fatal Mistake first formed as an after-school club in middle school, and the members enjoyed it so much they decided to keep it going into high school. The band's unusual name was inspired by a drawing made by Williams's sister of a cat jumping on a sleeping dog, with the caption, Bucky's Fatal Mistake.

Members Jones and Linafelt are students at Montgomery Blair in Silver Spring, and Williams is a student at the Nora School in downtown Silver Spring.

Bucky's Fatal Mistake is a garage rock band, performing

original songs, pulling inspiration from bands they like in order to create their own style. Charlie describes the band's style as “Earth-shakin' booty-quakin' rock and roll.”

Collectively, they're really into Pink Floyd and Magnapop, and in a lot of ways those tastes inspire the style of their band. “We all like bearded musicians,” Steinman says. “We'll continue the beard dynasty.”

Stage presence is something the band really focuses on when performing, and they draw inspiration from The Who's leadman Pete Townshend. There are a few things the band does to get ready for their concerts, like rehearsing at Williams's house, getting sandwiches from Santucci's deli in Silver Spring, and of course, talking about beards.

To see evidence of the band's hard work, be sure to check out their concert on March 28 at Haydee's Restaurant in Mount Pleasant! •

Battle of the Jackets: Helly Hansen Rises in Popularity

Alex Martin
Junior Editor

Helly Hansen has hit the halls hard. According to its website, Helly Hansen is a Norwegian clothing brand intended for outdoor survival and rescue. The North Face, another popular clothing brand at Wilson, is a U.S. brand founded to give climbers more accessible clothing options (thenorthface.com). Though it is unlikely that Wilson students are preparing a trek into the mountains, students sport both brands all winter.

But is one company's style edging out the other's?

Freshman Lauren Brown says she prefers The North Face jackets because Helly Hansen jackets don't come in as many patterns and aren't as warm.

However, junior Steven Coates argues against her, saying that Helly Hansen coats “are warmer and look a lot better!” In places such as Colorado and California, Helly Hansen has been a top-of-the-line winter jacket brand since 1877.

The North Face was founded in 1968 and has been an extremely profitable brand

in outdoor gear ever since; the company recently sponsored the US Freeskiing team in the 2014 Winter Olympics at Sochi. Freshman Lucas Engvall says that “North Face is a stronger, more independent company.”

Helly Hansen has been around for almost 100 years longer than The North Face, but appears not to have had the success and fame that The North Face has had so far.

A Helly Hansen jacket is usually priced around \$300, compared to the average North Face jacket which sells for around \$165.

The costly Helly Hansen jacket has been a target for theft around DC. In November, 2012 at the Woodley Park Metro Station, a teenager was stabbed and killed after confronting someone wearing his recently stolen Helly Hansen jacket, in a widely reported incident. Around the same time, 20 Helly Hansen items were stolen from U First Fashions and Sports. Some parents do not want their children wearing Helly Hansen jackets because of such crimes.

But despite the fear that wearing a Helly Hansen jacket may make them targets for

theft, it seems that Wilson students prefer Helly Hansen to The North Face.

Among the many Helly supporters, freshman Paloma Barada says, “Helly has more designs and a cool logo.”

With rising popularity in Wilson, DC, and the entire United States, Helly Hansen seems to be a formidable opponent to the dominance of The North Face. •

Lauren ReVeal contributed to this article.

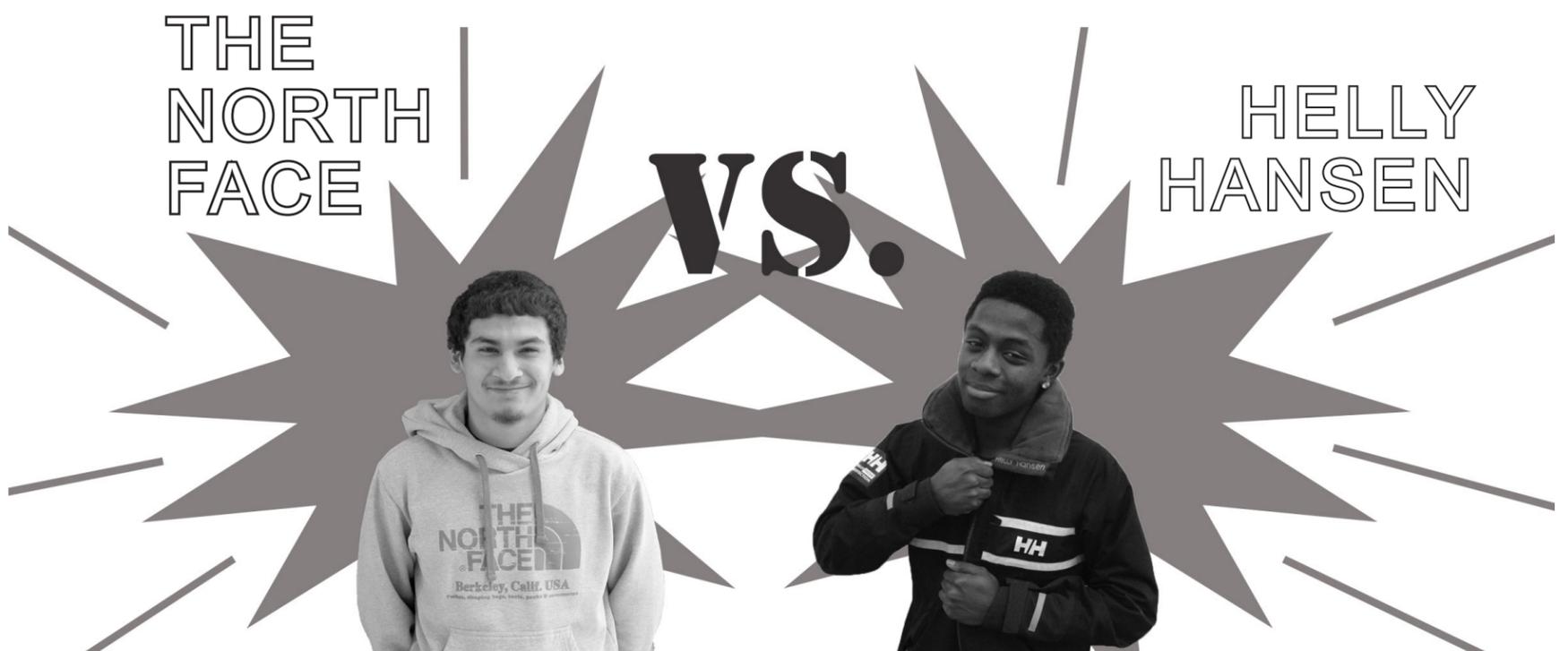


Photo Illustration by Rochelle O'Brien and Melinda Oluhara

NORTH FACE-OFF - Though North Face jackets remain a popular clothing item at Wilson, Helly Hansen is a formidable rival. Helly Hansen jackets are more expensive but the hype surrounding them is greater.



Photos courtesy of Katya Ekimian

WILSON HALLWAY PROJECT RUNWAY - Senior Joyce Distinto models one of Ekimian's designs. Ekimian often finds customers in Wilson students.

Artist's Profile: Katya Ekimian

Claire Parker
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Junior Katya Ekimian cuts an unassuming figure, walking down the Wilson hallways in plain jeans and a hoodie. Looking at her, you wouldn't know that she is a talented aspiring fashion designer, whose work has been praised by fashion moguls and is regularly worn by more than one Wilson student. "It's so funny, people always tell me, 'Katya, if you're so into fashion, why don't you dress better?'" she says. "I tell them I'm too busy making clothes to worry about myself."

Ekimian is a DC native with a global perspective. She went to Murch Elementary and then Washington Latin for a year, before moving to Egypt with her family for five years (her mother is a news reporter). Egypt is where her interest in fashion design took off, and she has incorporated elements of its culture into her work.

Ekimian is the artistic one in her family, and she grew up making art. But when her mother first bought her a sewing machine for her eighth birthday, Ekimian was initially not very interested in making clothes. "I really wasn't that into it," she says, "And then one year I was like, f*** it, why don't I just

start doing stuff?" She started small, practicing making little rectangles and basic purses. Her interest in sewing took off during her freshman year of high school. "I would make simple skirts, or a really simple shirt, and wear that to school, and everyone would be like 'Oh my God, you made that? No way!'" she says.

That year, nine girls at her school asked her to make their prom dresses. Ekimian had never taken any sewing lessons, but she agreed. "Some nights I would be crying, like 'aw I can't do this,' but I got it done and they were all happy," she says. "Everything I sew is honestly kind of a learning experience. I have to figure it out as I go."

Since then, she has had plenty of practice. During her sophomore year, she began to make gowns for her art classes as part of a 'wearable art' theme, a theme she is continuing this year in AP Studio Art 3D at Wilson. She transferred here junior year after moving back from Egypt. While she says that as a new girl, getting her name out there as a designer has been hard, she has already been commissioned to make at least four prom dresses this spring.

As a designer, she is remarkably versatile. "On the one hand, I'm really into making

gowns and evening wear, but I always love to make the hoodie or a sweater or something," she says.

Making each piece of clothing is a long process. "Whenever I make a garment, I go down to my fabric store, just grab something at random, then bring it up to my room where I sew, then just blast music. I listen to a lot of trap when I sew," she laughingly admits. "I hate starting a project and not finishing it, so I'll be in my room for hours on end, just sewing. And I'll usually get it done in a few hours."



Photo Courtesy of Katya Ekimian

Ekimian's high fashion idols include Marc Jacobs and Zac Posen. One high point of Ekimian's budding design career came when Posen stumbled across her Instagram account. "He liked and commented on a bunch of my Instagram photos, and I was crying, like 'Oh, my God!'"

But Ekimian also gets ideas from the DC fashion she sees every day around school. "I like Wilson, because people aren't afraid to wear what they want to wear," she says.

Egyptian street style has woven its way into her work as well. "I would get a lot of inspiration from draping from [when] we used to go on boats on the Nile, and just watching the fishermen. They would just wrap fabric around themselves and be there all day," she says.

She plans to channel these influences into a brand of her own. "I want it to be a well-rounded store, with men's wear, women's wear, everything from gowns to gym shorts," she explains. Ensuring that all of her clothes are American-made and accessible to the average American is important to her. "I want [my brand] to be affordable," she says. "Everyone in high school now -- these are my customers. These are the people I'm selling to."

Ekimian was recently accepted into a Nordstrom entrepreneurship competition. She presented her business plan at a three-day conference downtown last weekend. While she didn't place, she won \$100 and more exposure for her work.

Ekimian is not sure whether she will go to college, but if she does, she plans to aim for design schools like Parsons in New York, as well as a few in the fashion epicenters of London, Paris, and Milan. "It would be nice to actually learn how to sew," she says. "I've just been winging it."

She cites determination as the key to success. "That's what makes you stand out," she says. "Everyone else could be going out, but you're staying at home sewing, you're sticking with it, and that's how people become famous. They work themselves to the bone. I've stayed up endless nights just sewing, just to get it done."

All of her hard work pays off when she's rewarded by the sight of people wearing her clothing. "I love it when people ask me to make them clothes," she says. Follow and message her on Instagram (@katya.ekimian) to commission your very own Katya Ekimian design. •

ALL GOLD EVERYTHING - Junior Katya Ekimian shows off the dress she wore to prom, which she designed and made herself. She credits determination as the key to success.

"A Girl Like Her" is a Must See Movie

Monet Jones
Contributor

"A Girl Like Her" is a movie every teen, parent, teacher and administrator could learn a lot from.

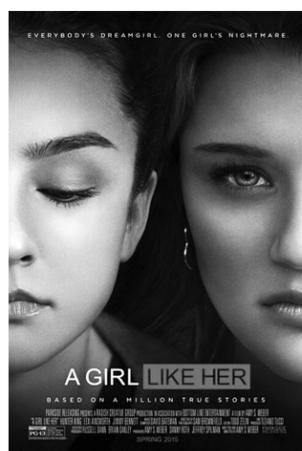
The movie is based on a true story and follows a high school teen who gets bullied in school on a daily basis. The film is documentary-style, with mini-clips from real events included, but it is dramatized. Distributed by Parkside Films, the movie isn't high-tech and isn't "Hollywood," but the quality is still good.

When I first began to watch the film I was thinking, "Well this never happens, nobody seriously gets bullied." But as the movie progressed I started to notice the small things; an "accidental" bump in the hallway, or a social media post, and I realized that these things do happen. They are often dismissed as normalcies of high school, though they shouldn't be.

In the movie the main character Jess is bullied by a former friend named Avery. A lot of the bullying happens through technology, and during

the movie the camera zooms onto Jess's phone showing texts from Avery like, "Your outfit was nice, who picked it out, your grandma? Wait she's dead," and "The world would be better without you." At first you may think, "Well, stuff like that's easy to brush off," but this happens to Jess for almost a year. It never stops, the constant harassment, and it takes the form of

emails, posts on social media, everything possible. Eventually, Jess tries to commit suicide.



My favorite thing about this movie is that it doesn't put all the blame on the bully. Most of the time, the student doing the bullying has gone through their own things, like family

issues, bad grades or abuse. There are two sides to every story, and this movie portrays that well. It truly opened my eyes to fully understanding the situation.

By the end of the movie I was in tears. Throughout the movie, they showed clips of film from the victim, which helped show how badly Jess was hurt. We often don't know how hurt someone really is until we see them breaking down in tears. This movie shows that the effects of bullying are so much more than what we see and hear. •

Printmaking Adds New Dimensions to Visual Arts Program

Pablo Lira
Contributor

Wilson's visual arts program will soon be updated with the addition of a new course to be taught by Avram Lubliner-Walters: Printmaking.

"Printmaking is the art of reproducing an idea through an image multiple times," Walters explained. The three kinds of printmaking that will be taught in this course will be relief printing, screen printing, and intaglio printing.

The class is being introduced as a means of broadening the styles of art taught at Wilson and to further open up students' experience with art, especially for those with hopes of studying it in college.

In the course, students will learn how to transform ideas and concepts into a drawing, then into a print, and finally into a product. They will also learn various methods of printing. Relief printing, the most basic form of printmaking, consists of making a template, usually



Photo by Jane Martin

PRINT PRO - Art teacher Avram Walters will be introducing a printmaking class to Wilson next year. The class will broaden the spectrum for Wilson's visual arts programming for students.

rubber, by carving an image into it. Then the artist applies ink to the template and presses it into a sheet of paper. When the artist removes the template, they will be able to see a mirrored image of the one they carved out.

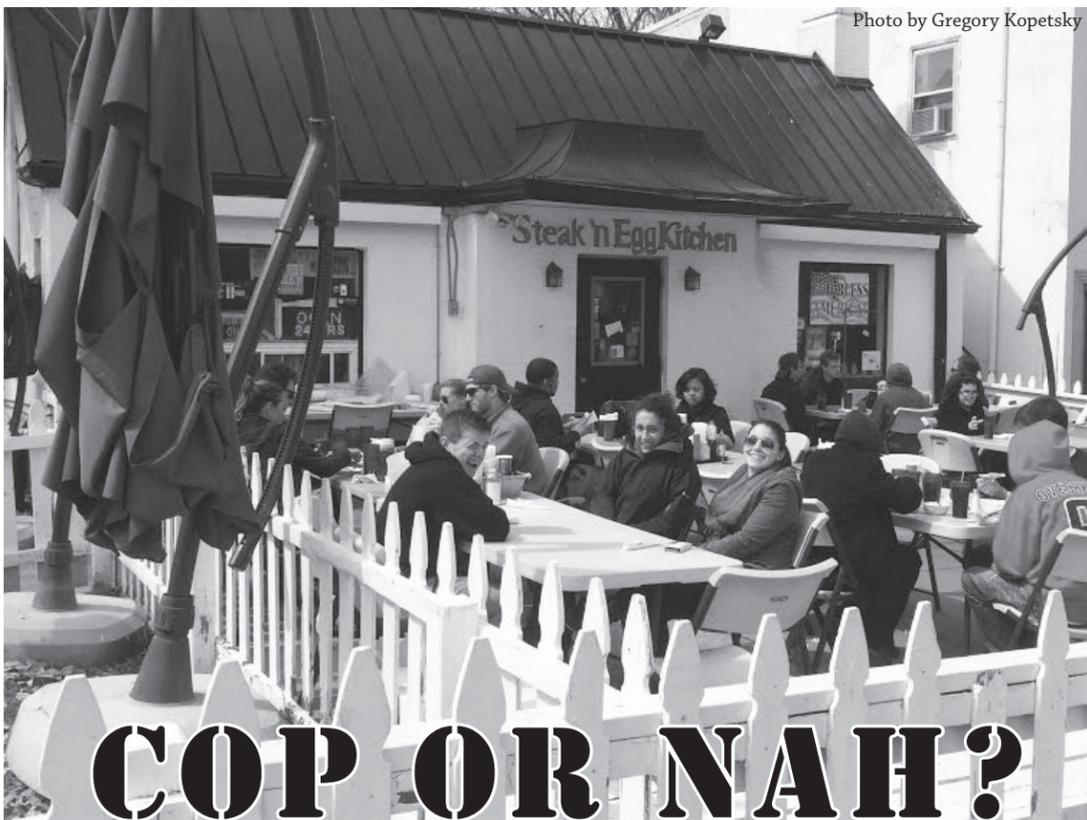
"This class will be a rigorous

one," according to Walters, so don't expect to go in there and sit around the entire period. It will be a high level class and will require lots of studio work outside of class time, but there will be little to no homework. Students who plan to sign up for this course should come ready to work diligently.

Through this course, Walters hopes to "reawaken [his] fire with printmaking," and to pass on that strong passion to a dedicated group of students. He believes that these students will not just learn printmaking itself, but will also learn to be patient, to follow directions precisely, to be persistent, and to be consistent so that all projects will be great, even spectacular.

Anyone considering going into the art field, or simply hoping to learn something challenging and new, should consider this new course - it's guaranteed not to disappoint. •

Photo by Gregory Kopetsky



COP OR NAH? STEAK AND EGG WITH KOPETSKY AND SMEE

It's 1 a.m., and you've just been physically removed from Kitty O'Shea's; it's a typical night for a Wilson student.

It's past curfew, so you should be getting home, but your stomach is growling as loud as Coach Mark through his megaphone. You've got to get some munch. At first you think you'll just snag a shaq soda and a honey bun from CVS, but someone in your crüe suggests a miracle of a move: Steak and Egg.

Steak and Egg is always the move. Off the L, everyone ends up there and if you're cool, you will too. But you've got to know what to get.

The best and most cost-efficient option is by far the Egg'N. For just four bucks (\$4.50 if you're more of a bagel person), you get a perfectly larded breakfast sandwich that satisfies every inch of your soul. But when it arrives, don't immediately rush into it. With condiments out the Asomugha, there are infinite possibilities. You can slather some syrup, shake some sriracha, cast some ketchup, or even bang some butter on your sandy. Top it off with a milkshake and you're golden.

Steak and Egg is traditional in many ways, especially in its lack of attention to sanitation--it's about as dirty as a Wilson toilet seat. This adds character, as does simply going to the bathroom at Wilson.

With rumors of Steak and Egg closing, you should get your fill now. •

FINAL VERDICT: COP

MARCH HOROSCOPES

By Brian Keyes

ARIES March 21 - April 19

You've got a quiz next period. Yes, you did forget about it. No, I am not joking. You will only know about 60 percent of the material. It is too late to study. I know your confidence in the good faith effort rule is reassuring you. It shouldn't.

TAURUS April 20 - May 20

Beware the water fountain on the fourth floor near the science rooms. Nothing is there for you but danger.

GEMINI May 21 - June 20

A fateful encounter awaits you in the halls. It might be meeting the love of your life, but it's probably a hall sweep.

CANCER June 21 - July 22

You should have stayed home today. You miss the way things used to be. You miss Cahall. These thoughts will keep you occupied, which is why you won't see that frisbee.

LEO July 23 - August 22

Stop handing people your mixtape. It is not nearly as fire as you think.

VIRGO August 23 - September 22

You will meet a future love interest today. You just have to know where to look. And if you don't find them, my snapchat is brian_keyes ;).

LIBRA September 23 - October 22

I realize it might seem tempting, but do not try to break up a fight in the hall. You will get hit in the crossfire. Someone will definitely make a vine of it. People will laugh at you.

SCORPIO October 23 - November 21

Seriously, just go talk to one of the Wrap MCs. I can point one out to you if need be.

SAGGITARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

Hope in reality is the worst of all evils because it prolongs the torments of man. Do not hope you will bring your grades up.

CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

Why did you sign up for SAT Prep? Who told you to do that? Don't listen to them. Go right now to your counselor and change your schedule. You deserve better than taking SAT Prep.

AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 18

Try something new today. Commit to having a new experience. Just don't get too adventurous and eat the cafeteria lunch food. I don't want you to make yourself ill.

PISCES February 19 - March 20

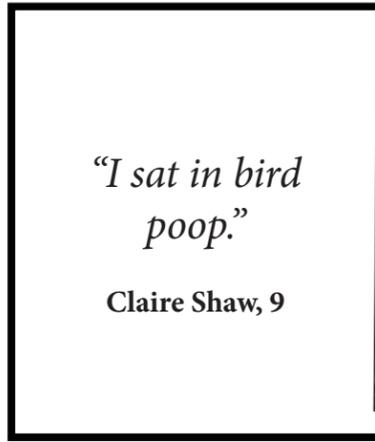
If you see Mr. Preacher today, flee. Ask no questions, simply do it and pray he does not see you.

What's the unluckiest thing that's ever happened to you?



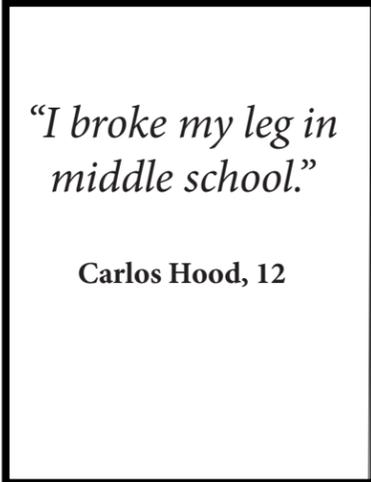
"Taking the L while playing soda pong."

Adriana Hidalgo, 10
Eric Amaya, 12



"I sat in bird poop."

Claire Shaw, 9



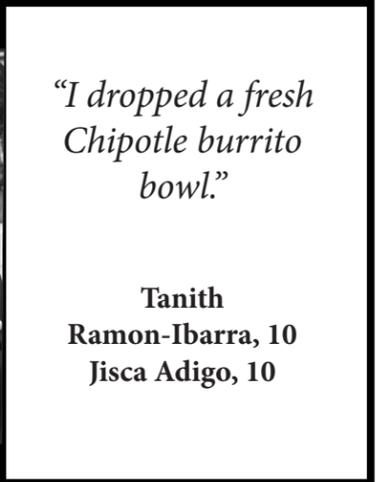
"I broke my leg in middle school."

Carlos Hood, 12



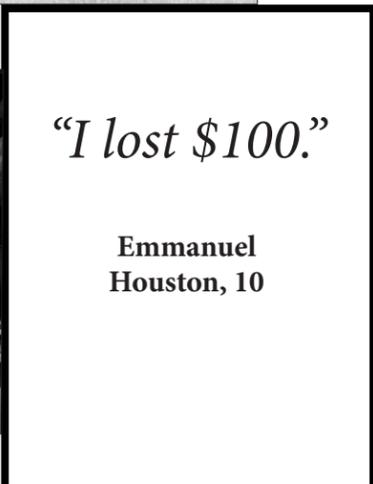
"I dropped a fresh Chipotle burrito bowl."

Tanith Ramon-Ibarra, 10
Jisca Adigo, 10



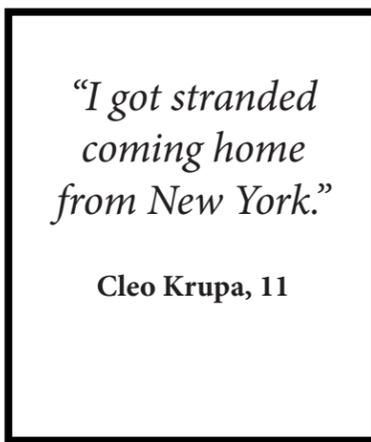
"I lost \$100."

Emmanuel Houston, 10



"My parents told me I was an accident."

Juliette Fratto, 10



"I got stranded coming home from New York."

Cleo Krupa, 11



"Meeting Sarah."

Sophie Weich, 9
Franny Sewell, 9
Sarah Carleton, 9



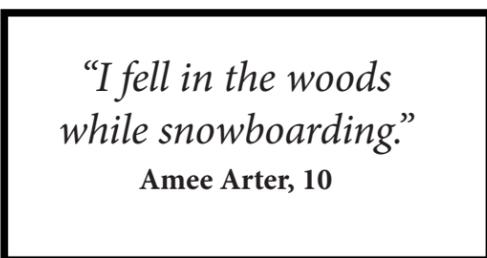
"A bomb blew up in my hand and I got a scar."

Charlie Pace, 9
Dominic Fantauzzo, 9
Marcel Virachittevin, 9



"I fell in the woods while snowboarding."

Amee Arter, 10



*"My wife divorced me."
"I got choked by a cop after a concert."*

Simon Gomez, 11
Meru Kush, 11
Nora Canellakis, 11
Danny Kunk, 11
Henry Rankin, 11
Alejandro Martinez, 11

