

STRIDENT

(strid'nt), *adj.* Conspicuously and offensively loud; being sharply insistent on being heard

Amity Regional High School

Woodbridge, CT 06525

April 1, 2025

School Cafe Receives Prestigious Michelin Star

by Hannah Guo '25

In a groundbreaking culinary achievement, Amity Regional High School's cafeteria has

been awarded the highly coveted Michelin Star, placing it in the ranks of elite establishments like Le Coucou, The French Laundry, and the Ikea food court.

According to the Michelin Guide's sacred and mysterious protocols, all inspections must remain anonymous. Still, the Trident was able to secure a brief, highly classified rendezvous with Michelin Inspector "J," behind the vending machines near the gym. He arrived ten minutes late, sipped from a carton of expired chocolate milk, and asked three times if the writer was followed.

To maintain secrecy, Michelin inspector "J" posed as a student during all visits, an undercover mission he later described as "the most harrowing assignment of my career, including the time I was assigned to review a raw chicken sushi bar in rural Wisconsin." The sushi place was open for three hours before being shut down by eight federal agencies. J continued,

"But honestly, I got the hang of it. By the fifth visit, I was blending in seamlessly with the student community by grunting like a sleep paralysis demon, playing Block Blast 24/7, dodging hall moni-



Photo contributed by Michelin
Principal Andre Hauser and Assistant Principal Miguel Pickering with the Michelin representative.

tors, and mumbling about psychological trauma from E-Hall Pass."

Not all students were surprised by the award. Many had long suspected that their lunches were, in fact, culturally significant.

"I always knew we were built different," boasts Daniel del Prete '26.

However, much of the cafeteria's newfound acclaim has been attributed to the recent acquisition of a toaster, a humble yet revolutionary device that has single handedly elevated the deli to the Michelin level. Since the toaster's installation, deli line wait times have tripled, but never fear.

Now that the cafeteria has been thrust into the global food scene, big changes are underway. Hairnets will be replaced with toques. All plastic utensils will be plated in 24-karat gold. The daily lunch line wait will now be accompanied by a live violinist named Trevor.

So, the next time you're about to complain about getting cut in line by the entire football team, shoved into a stranger, or clocked in the face by a girl's Stanley cup while waiting for your lunch, just remember: it's all part of the experience.

My friends, you're about to be dining in a Michelin-starred institution.
Bon appétit, Amity!

Planned Escalators to Make Traveling Around School Easier

by Eve Marin '27



After years of students aching from the difficulties of traveling through school weighed down by a backpack full of notebooks and folders for every subject, the administration finally took action.

It was recently decided, on March 28th, that Amity would be installing escalators to replace the current staircases. The new escalators are currently set to be installed by the end of April so that by May, stairs will be a thing of the past for Amity students.

The usual strategy of many other high schools looking to solve this problem is to place all unnecessary belongings in your assigned locker and then return to the locker before and after each class to obtain necessary items.

However, here students face a challenge as the lockers are quite thin and unable to fit most students' backpacks. Therefore, the lockers go unused, and students continue to

be forced to carry their backpacks to each class. This requires students to go upstairs to the second floor when accessing a class or even carry their bags up two flights of stairs when trying to use the third-floor swimming pool.

The compounded complaints have spread awareness about this issue and Principal Andre Hauser has decided that escalators are a necessity to save the backs of students.

Students are excited about the arrival of the escalators and the ease it will bring to daily life. Lucy Jiang '27 commented, "I think the new escalators are a genius idea. Why move your legs up stairs when you can step up once and have a machine bring you up?"

Other students feel similarly joyful about the implementation of these escalators. Maya Bakerts '26 stated, "I struggle with back issues and the load of carrying my backpack up and down the stairs

with me every day simply makes my back pain greater."

Bakerts added, "I have friends who face similar issues and I know that these escalators will make traveling around school easier."

Students are not the only ones who are appreciative of the new escalators.

In a brief conversation with chemistry teacher Bob Nostair, he commented, "I have many students who wander into class a few minutes late breathing heavily and with faces flushed, likely from the journey up the stairs to my classroom which is located on the second floor. I think that the escalators will help students get to class on time with more ease."

Thus far both teachers and students alike are seeing the positives in the installment of these escalators and are thrilled about the easier travel they will provide for students with large backpacks.

Teacher Catches Student Cheating with Neuralink Implant

by Alex Klee '25

At first, all of the students in Courtney Morrison's eighth-period AP Calculus class only heard a light humming through the room. They were taking their unit seven test, and their stress was radiating through the air.

Because of this, many students brushed off the droning ring as all in their imaginations or simply an overworked school laptop pleading to be charged – they could not be

more wrong.

As has been officially confirmed just this week by Amity Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Byars, an Amity student was caught cheating on a math test not with a phone or hidden note sheet, but with a Neuralink brain implant. Neuralink, a medical device engineered by one of tech mogul and billionaire Elon Musk's companies, aims to revolutionize the biomedical technology industry. The device's goal is to interpret the brain's neural signals and convert

them into "actions" that are then sent to a nearby device and executed.

While it has promising impacts for paralyzed individuals, this student took advantage of the internet capabilities that the device has, thus allowing them to reference their favorite calculus YouTube accounts and ChatGPT to help them solve the more challenging questions contained in the free-response portion of the test.

While at first this student's plan ran smoothly, they were discovered

when the Neuralink began to rapidly beep. Having not read the warning labels on the device closely, the student had missed that the battery life of the implant sharply decreased when interacting with the internet.

Because of the incredibly delicate electronics contained in the device, losing power can cause irreparable damage to the system's computers and monitors. Luckily, the Neuralink has a high volume and frequency alarm that effectively alerts those

Continued on page 2

Shh... Spartan Secrets Spilled

by Mr. Spartan '25

The halls whisper. The walls have ears. And somewhere, buried beneath a stack of textbooks and an

AP Lit essay no one finished, the truth lurks, waiting to be uncovered. The residents of BOW like to think their secrets are safe, but let's be honest—if you've done something worth hiding, Mr. Spartan already knows. So grab your popcorn, dear readers. It's time for the annual deep dive into the mysteries, scandals, and eyebrow-raising coincidences that make the surreptitious world of BOW tick.

Speaking of teachers, did you ever feel like Mr. Clark just knows? You barely think about whispering, and he's already giving you The Look™. Need to sneak out a study snack? He's there. Unreturned, overdue books? He's already emailing you. Some say it's librarian intuition. Others claim he has access to the school's all-powerful security feeds. But the real twist that's sure to send shockwaves through our beloved school? Mr. Clark is a retired spy with a microchip implant that detects rule-breaking within a ten-meter radius. Try to break a rule in the library—you will fail.

The science research program has never been the same since *those students* left. You know who. The One Who Came Before. The whispers of their unfinished projects still haunt the classroom. If you stay too late, you might hear the eerie rustling of a black binder with no one around. Some say the ghost is a former student, eternally submitting an overdue literature review. Others claim the former teacher never really left...lingering just long enough to sigh at the problem children. No shade but the energy in that room? Unsettling. And the school board still refuses to approve the "Exorcism Equipment" budget request for the third year running.

Spotted: M.N. and M.Y. looking very cozy at an opulent party last Saturday. Sources say there was a moment—a shoulder touch that lasted just a little too long. Are they just friends? Or are we witnessing the birth of this year's power couple that will have everyone updating their relationship vision boards? Inside sources confirm M.Y. was caught scrolling through M.N.'s camera roll at 2 am looking at vacation photos from three summers ago. Nobody studies Grand Canyon pics with that level of dedication unless there's a research paper due on chemistry. The people demand answers.

Buckle up, BOW-siders, because my identity remains BOW's ultimate mystery. Hunt for me in the cafeteria. Search the library stacks. Analyze handwriting if you must. But know this—I've perfected hiding in plain sight. The walls may have ears, darlings, but I am the walls. Sleep tight, knowing I'll be here, watching, waiting, and documenting every delicious detail of your delightfully dramatic lives. You know you love me.



NO NO,
Mr. Spartan

Scarlett Zhai '25 assisted Mr. Spartan with this story.

Administrator Turned Castaway Principal Hauser Prepares for Survivor

by Jacqueline Miller '27
and Libby Grant '25

Earlier this week, the Trident staff was excited to get the inside scoop on Principal Andre Hauser's latest endeavors. He has been chosen for the 2026 season of Survivor, the competitive reality TV show where contestants are placed on an island and must compete against each other for the \$1 million dollar grand prize.

Competitive all his life, Hauser is ready to dominate the Survivor landscape. He has begun intense training to prepare, and many students have spotted him around the school engaged in highly unusual activities.

Amity senior Coco Nut remarked, "While sitting in the senior courtyard I saw Mr. Hauser through the window in his office whittling a stick into a machete and practicing his coconut chopping skills."

Meanwhile, the Physical Education department and Hauser have been periodically meeting. Rumor has it that a swimming pool is going to be installed to help with Hauser's training, which will include swimming, backpacking and of course, wrestling alligators. Students report that Hauser has been training in the pond in front of the school in an attempt to find some alligators and other creatures to practice his wrestling skills.

Freshman Ally Gator remarks, "I saw him out there at five in the morning, holding a fishing pole in one hand and practicing tying knots with the other!"

When asked what prompted his application to be on Survivor, Hauser simply

replied, "My wife submitted my application, a bit of a surprise, but I think she wants the million dollars."

Despite the shock, Hauser is quite excited.

He adds, "What else am I going to do with my summer break?"

Most agree that Hauser has a great shot at the grand prize. After all, he has lots of



Photo contributed by Jeff Probst

Principal Andre Hauser deep into Survivor training

experience with psychological warfare as he is always on guard for any and all mischievous behavior from the Amity student body. Hauser will excel at the cooperation piece as he listens without judgment and makes everyone feel heard and understood. Some may say it's his secret weapon!

Hauser shared, "I work with a lot of very diverse and unique people here so if I can work with 1350 teenagers, hopefully I can work with a handful of Survivor contestants."

Teachers Begin Instructing Students with New 'Brain Rot' Language

by Soma Kim '25

Over the past year, intense debate led to the ultimate selection of

"brain rot" as the Oxford Word of the Year for 2024. Oxford University Press defines the term as a "supposed deterioration of a person's mental or intellectual state, especially viewed as a result of overconsumption of material (now particularly online content) considered to be trivial or unchallenging."

However, Amity teachers feel the negative connotation associated with the definition does not reflect the true benefits of "brain rot" language.

Julie Chevan, English Department Chair, believes brain rot is an excellent addition to her already proficient vocabulary. She said, "I help students reach their full potential. I think my use of 'brain rot' language is crucial in helping my students in AP Literature and Composition cook on the AP exam."

The benefits of adopting brain rot are

clear, as Chevan's students have demonstrated growth and sophistication in their literary abilities.

Precalculus and statistics teacher Joycelyn Romero believes there is no use avoiding brain rot in the classroom. In fact, such language is already embedded in her curriculum.

Romero explains, "In the sequences and series unit of my pre-calculus class, we utilize sigma notation to denote the sum of a series of terms. My AP Statistics class also delights in using the σ symbol to represent the standard deviation of a population. It is always such a pleasure to hear my students snicker every time sigma is introduced."

Teachers at Amity feel that there is no better way to spark motivation in students than to extract the fruitful benefits of "brain rot" language and utilize them in the classroom. Students will certainly make great strides in their academics by becoming accustomed to brain rot culture.

Student Cheats with Neuralink Implant

continued from page 1 in a 35 yard radius of a potential battery failure.

Thus, as the student started the last page of their exam, the whole math wing quickly became aware that something was amiss.

Manaal Akbar '25 shared, "At first I thought it was a phone alarm, but as the ringing got louder, it felt like my eardrum would burst." The whole wing had to evacuate and the class had their tests canceled.

Upon discovering the implant embedded in the student's skull, many questions arose for students, administrators, and medical professionals alike.

For students, many found themselves questioning why someone would ever go

through such great lengths to cheat on a test, with Matthew Muravnik '25 commenting, "That just doesn't seem worth it, like Ms. Morrison throws hard problems on our tests sometimes, but not to the point where you have to shove a computer in your brain."

"However, if I had the implant, I would use it to play Block Blast during our tests to simulate how I normally find myself during our lessons," he said.

Ultimately, this shocking discovery has encouraged the Amity Board of Education to review their policies to be more pertinent to this modern technology.

The real question that remains, however, is how far would you go to ace a calculus quiz?




Tidy Soap Industries (Don't rearrange)

Ever feel concerned and overwhelmed with the rise in AI? Well worry no more! Forget your worries, embrace the machine, and buy these new and exciting AI tools for yourself (no ethical or moral questions here!):

Introducing VanGo! This innovative new chatbot can easily copy...err redefine any previous work to assist you on your journey to artistic perfection! Just be sure to pay the monthly \$40 subscription so you can actually use it!

Here is ChatIDK, another great AI tool to help you with writing. It definitely will not steal your information or let you cheat on any assignments or write your essays. This tool is now available to you for a very low \$100 annual subscription!

Last but not least, rounding out this not at all exploitative line of products is InstaFilter! For a completely innocent and legitimate reason, Tidy Soap Industries would like you to install this ~~view~~ program to help optimize your device! No charge and definitely no chance of InstaFilter controlling and monitoring what content you view!

THE AMITY TRIDENT

LXXV-No. 6

Amity Regional High School

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April 1, 2025

Five Years Later COVID's Lasting Impact

by Jacqueline Miller '27
and Eve Marin '27

This March marked five years since the world shut down due to the global COVID pandemic. During this period, schools transitioned to remote learning, forcing students and teachers to adapt to learning online. Now, five years later, much has changed, including students' approach to education and major shifts in social behaviors.

Math teacher Joycelyn Romero, who has been at Amity for 21 years, said, "I think a lot of students got comfortable with using Photomath. There's definitely less value in learning and more just checking a box and getting it done."

However, the increase in technology use was not limited to students. Vicki Hulse, a librarian, highlighted how the pandemic pushed teachers to become more comfortable with technology – an important skill in a world rapidly relying more and more on these devices.

"When we started out in COVID, I would say probably half the staff was not comfortable with technology when using it other than in very informal ways," Hulse said. "I think the staff is much more comfort-

"There were so many behaviors that we didn't get before that I would call middle school behaviors, immature behaviors, but in bigger bodies and the ability to be more disrespectful. That's slowing down, but it's still there. There are way more students that require mental health support in the last five years than, in the five or six years before COVID."

Others see a decline in the socialization abilities of students. Specifically, Darci Siclari, one of the school security personnel, noticed a change in students' communication skills since the return from online school.

Siclari shared, "Communication isn't what it used to be. Kids used to just come up to us and talk all the time, and now we say, 'Where are you going?' and they say, 'why are you yelling at me?'"

On the other hand, Courtney Cambell, a guidance counselor said, "I feel like kids have different perspectives on things now. They had that whole period where they weren't in school, so they are a little more resilient and appreciate being in person more now because they experienced what it was like not being in person. I feel that's gotten a lot better."

Moreover, school nurse Kate Giancola-Enders has noticed some new skills that students have taken away from surviving a pandemic, "I've seen people be a lot more educated about viruses in general," she said, "and learning how to protect themselves and not passing it to others which I didn't see much of before."

During the shutdown in the spring of 2020, the Trident staff and writers had to scramble to figure out how to continue to publish while out of school. Then Editor-in-Chief Ella Marin '20, remembers it well. "We were very innovative during that time. We downloaded InDesign on our personal laptops to do the layouts at home."

It is an undoubtable fact that COVID had a great impact on students that can still be felt today.



Photo contributed by Isabella Pfannenbecker '21

Students stand apart and wear masks to follow COVID guidelines in June 2020 after volunteering at a hospital.

able using technology, even now embedding AI into their lessons."

The increase in technology skills among teachers can be a benefit for students, as lessons can become more engaging and efficient with the use of tools like AI.

Associate principal Frank Barretta sees the biggest change for young people in terms of their social-emotional health as well as their socialization skills. He remarked,

School Community Celebrates Unified Week

Amity celebrated "Unified Week" from March 24th to 28th with a goal to highlight how the school community can work to include others and ultimately become a truly welcoming space.

During lunches last week, students encouraged their peers and the faculty to sign a pledge to end the use of harmful words, such as the "r-word." Also included was a fundraising contest to soak a team of staff, including administration, athletics, and security, with a bucket of water.

Additionally, the United Basketball team recently competed in a tournament held against other Unified teams in the Southern Connecticut Conference. This initiative aimed to bring attention to how Amity can better support each other and build a stronger community bond at school.



AAPPL Offers Path to Biliteracy

by Sarah Shaikh '25

The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) is a language proficiency test. This test can have many positive benefits for students as it provides them with a seal of biliteracy, a prestigious recognition in language proficiency.

On March 13th, Amity seniors enrolled in a world language class took the AAPPL or ACTFL Latin Interpretive Reading Assessment (ALIRA) test. The AAPPL was given to those who take Spanish, French, or Chinese, while those that take Latin took the ALIRA test. AAPPL consists of four sections: reading, writing, listening, and speaking, while the ALIRA only consists of one section: reading. Seniors that demonstrate proficiency in English and their language of study will receive a seal of biliteracy on their diploma and recognition during seniors awards night.

Feng Xia, the chair of the World Language Department said, "The seal of biliteracy can open many doors in terms of future career opportunities, scholarship applications, and even the potential to earn college credits for language proficiency."

Xia continued, saying, "It can allow seniors to have a significant edge in a competitive job market and boost their academic credentials for college admissions."

With this test having numerous benefits for seniors, Xia and other world language teachers strongly encourage rising seniors to take this test next year.

While Amity does not require seniors to take this test, doing so gives them the opportunity to showcase their language proficiency.

Hallie Lai '25 said, "Taking the test was a good experience and helpful to see the level of fluency I was at."

Additionally, Cashlyn Cunneen '25 talked about her thoughts

Continued on page 2

IN THIS
ISSUE



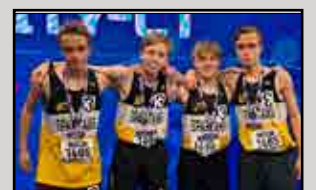
Youth Advocacy
Opinions, 3



Mammal Madness
Features, 5



Artist of the Month
Arts, 7



Spring Sports
Sports, 8

AAPPL Offers Path to Biliteracy

Continued from page 1 on the test, saying, “It is worth taking as it gives the opportunity to be considered bilingual in the language you’ve spent so long learning.”

The test was administered on the in-school SAT exam day. Xia talked about how she hopes to “revise this test with the feedback from teachers and students” this year to ensure that upcoming seniors recognize the importance of taking the AAPPL.

In an update shared with teachers on March 26th, Xia wrote, “Twenty-seven of our students have earned the Seal of Biliteracy this year! Based on their impressive performance on the AAPPL test and last year’s AP scores, we have three students in Latin, seven students in Chinese, [and] seventeen students in Spanish.”

The AAPPL test is an important one that allows students to receive a designation that is both an honor and a valuable tool for their future.

CTE Students Visit Hornblower Marine



Photograph contributed by Lynn Cocco

On February 27th, a group of CTE students visited Hornblower Marine in Bridgeport. Hornblower maintains and repairs boats and ships from all around the eastern seaboard.

The students learned about the different types of professionals that work in this 30,000 square foot facility. From engineers to accountants to tradespeople, everyone works together to get the job done.



A Rock Paper Scissors Showdown - for Teachers

by Sarinah Zamir '27

While most students were preoccupied with college basketball’s March Madness, another competition happened right here at Amity – the second annual Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament, run by the Amity Cheer Squad, a group of staff dedicated to boosting teacher morale and making school a more positive and engaging place.

The Cheer Squad felt that it was too easy to get caught up in the challenges of daily life as a teacher, so they sought ways to bring back some fun and spontaneity to the profession. Their goal is to create a culture where teachers and staff feel energized and appreciated.

To help, each midmark there is coffee or hot cocoa in the teachers lounge, seasonal treats, or a fun activity such as a scavenger hunt or raffle. The group also believes that when teachers are having fun and getting involved in their school community, it creates an environment where students are more likely to do the same.

As a part of this effort to bring joy to the staff, the Rock Paper Scissors tournament was launched last winter and has been a big hit. This tournament is run throughout one day with teachers beginning with one beaded necklace worn around their neck.

Chemistry teacher John Laliberte said, “Teachers spend most of their time in their classrooms, so it is really positive the school does things to try and build community amongst everybody.”

During the school day, teachers can challenge anyone wearing one to a game of Rock, Paper, Scissors. Whoever wins takes all of the opponents beads, and the loser is out. Teachers who

still had a necklace at 2:30 were instructed to meet in the courtyard for the championship matches, and the ultimate winner received a grand prize, which this year was an Amazon gift card.

This competition brings out community spirit amongst teachers, and it is felt across all departments as they venture out to challenge each other to Rock, Paper, Scissors matches.

This year, the winner was Breanie Hernandez, a teacher in the SAILS department who works with Amity students with disabilities. Hernandez is new to the high school, so she truly felt like the competition helped her to meet new people.

She said, “It brought us closer. Being new here I got to know a lot of teachers.” She felt the effect of the competition throughout her day as well, remarking, “It made my mood lighter during what had been a challenging day.” Hernandez overall enjoyed the competition, and is hoping to win again next year!

Last year’s winner was English teacher Tasia Kimball, who takes great pride in winning many Amity Cheer Squad events. The winning match last year is pictured below – just days after having thumb surgery!

Kimball said, “I am not only competitive, I’m the most competitive teacher here.” She also noted that she’s even won a 65 inch TV and a Fitbit in the past at Amity. Most kindly, Kimball did not participate in this year’s Rock, Paper, Scissors competition, because she “wanted to give someone else a chance to win.”

At the end of the day, both the winners and the losers of this competition felt the positive effect on the staff environment, getting to converse with new people and add a bit of fun to their day.

Changes in Federal DEI Policies Impact Educational Environments

by Armaan Shrivastav '27

On February 23, 2025, the Amity Regional School District No. 5 Board of Education, led by Chair Paul Davis and Superintendent Dr. Jennifer P. Byars, addressed the community in a letter emphasizing their dedication to student safety, academic success, and overall well-being. The letter highlighted the district’s legal obligation to comply with applicable laws and regulations while maintaining a positive and inclusive educational environment.

While the Amity Board of Education’s letter does not explicitly mention Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), this message aligns with the recent federal policy shifts under the Trump administration, which have significantly impacted DEI initiatives nationwide.

On February 14, 2025, the U.S. Department of Education sent a letter to educational institutions receiving federal funds nationwide to stop any practice that uses “race prefer-

ences and stereotypes as a factor in their admissions, hiring, promotion, compensation, scholarships, prizes, administrative support, sanctions, discipline and beyond.” The letter gave schools 14 days to comply or face loss of funding.

This directive has sparked concern across the country, particularly for districts that have long emphasized DEI initiatives. While Amity’s letter focuses on compliance with the law, its reaffirmation of inclusivity suggests the district is working to balance these new legal requirements with its ongoing commitment to fostering a diverse and welcoming school environment.

Despite the federal rollback of DEI programs, Amity has maintained its commitment to diversity and inclusion. The district has actively promoted DEI as a fundamental part of its educational mission, recognizing the importance of creating an environment where students from all backgrounds feel valued.

One example is the “Increasing Educator Diversity Plan,” approved in April 2024, which aims to re-

cruit a more diverse teaching staff to reflect the student body. Such efforts highlight Amity’s belief in the importance of representation and inclusivity in education.

Peter Downhour, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Instructional Coach, emphasized that Amity’s DEI efforts are primarily guided by state and local laws rather than federal directives.

He clarified that the federal policy shift does not necessarily alter Amity’s existing programs, “We are governed by policies from the Connecticut General Assembly, the Connecticut State Department of Education, and the Amity Board of Education. Changes in DEI policy at the federal level, particularly within the executive branch, largely do not impact us. Our DEI goals have a strong focus on school climate and education.”

Looking ahead, Downhour noted that Connecticut has strengthened its commitment to school climate policies. He anticipates that Amity will implement a revised Connecticut School Climate Policy starting on

July 1, 2025, which would focus on improving the school climate, mirroring current DEI programs.

Even as federal DEI policies shift, Amity remains committed to fostering an inclusive environment. Downhour stressed the importance of community support in sustaining these efforts, “We want each student to feel safe, feel like they belong here, have a relevant curriculum, and develop respectful, healthy relationships that support their school experience.

“I believe the most important thing that parents and the community can do to support our goals is to continue supporting the teachers and schools in their work to provide a quality education for each student,” Downhour added.

As the legal landscape surrounding DEI continues to evolve, Amity’s response highlights the resilience of local educational priorities. Whether further challenges emerge remains to be seen, but for now, the district’s message is clear: students’ well-being, inclusivity, and academic success remain top priorities.

“Spring Cleaning” for the Mind

by Janet Fan ‘26

Four days before the end of the third quarter, when the work is piling up, I am lying on my bed at 2 am, reading a book for the first time in months, sobbing happy tears. Of course, I’d read the obligatory literature for English classes, but it had been so long since I’d immersed myself in a story for the simple pleasure of enjoying it.

As a kid, I’d fill up a beach bag half my size with books each week, becoming so immersed in each character’s story I would forget time and place in the real world. Six-year-old me would be horrified at how 17-year-old me aged, too tired and stressed to truly enjoy the often overlooked privilege of reading.

Now, as I’m reading, my heart feels like a parched land recently quenched with rain. All the weight of chronic stressors, about post-secondary plans, grades, and standardized tests, start to flow down and out of my fingertips as I turn the pages of my book.

That is the illusion that the “clock in, clock out” mentality, the dull routine of dreary winter days, can do to a person (shoutout to my fellow juniors out there!). The novelty of

the new school year wears out and the reality of new worries sets in, and as the gloomy, dark days drag on, this leads to a perfect recipe for burnout. The world seems a little more gray and everything, just a little more monotonous.

If you’re feeling like me, know that you’re not alone. Studies have long confirmed that human behavior and emotionality tend to change depending on the season, perhaps due to evolutionary reasons. But there is good news. For one, spring is just around the corner, with its promises of serotonin-filled sunshine. Secondly, and more importantly, within our control, is our mind’s remarkable ability to find glimmers of color if we intentionally seek them out. Personally, art has always been my conduit, a lens for me to see ordinary beauty in my own life. I’d forgotten how sometimes the best cure for letting out chronic stress is to pick a Pixar movie or heartfelt novel and sob out those pent-up tears. Or, maybe the solution is to belt out the words to the most cathartic song you know as you pull out of your driveway.

During the business of our own lives, we often forget to check in on ourselves so emotions never end up getting expressed.

Overcoming Barriers to Youth Advocacy

by Joy Deng ‘26
and Bryan Lin ‘26

Civic engagement among youth has many benefits. Personally, it can help youth develop leadership and communication skills; and when done well it can promote large social change and cultivate a positive and open political environment.

Why aren’t more youth involved? We believe there are two main reasons—youth don’t believe they’re qualified to participate and youth don’t believe it’s worth it to participate.

According to Tufts social studies researcher Ruby Belle Booth, young people continue to believe in their—and their generation’s—political power, but some don’t feel qualified to participate, especially youth of color. Thirty-four of youth of color say they feel qualified to participate in politics, compared to 44% of white youth.

However, in their survey, many young people said they plan to do it in the future or would be interested in doing it if they were presented with the opportunity, which indicates that youth do have issues they care deeply about, but they currently lack access to opportunities, resources, and guidance to advocate and create change.

On the other hand, some youth may have many strong opinions, but believe that it isn’t worth it to actively participate. Politics is draining, especially in our country’s current political climate with polarization and human rights issues constantly on the debate table. Demonstrating, marching, and protesting takes time and may pose threats to safety, especially when students have to juggle homework and other responsibilities.

And even if some youth are especially passionate about a particular issue, it is hard to go about creating actual change as most of us aren’t in positions of power, and it would almost seem like yelling into a void. So it is understandable that most youth are inactive and passive—participating in our political process is hard, tedious, and oftentimes doesn’t have

significant outcomes. Because of this, some may even further develop a cynical attitude towards politics in general, which is completely understandable.

The Connecticut Youth Legislative Advisory Council (CYLAC), a youth-led subcommittee of the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity & Opportunity (CWESCO), works to break down these barriers to youth participation. By providing structured pathways for engagement, CYLAC addresses both the “not qualified” and “not worth it” concerns that keep youth from advocacy. Started and managed by students from diverse backgrounds and grade levels throughout Connecticut, CYLAC strives to ensure all students across the state have

representation in our legislature. CYLAC’s main effect on public policy is through member testimonies on legislative bills, proposing policies, supporting Representatives, and conducting impactful research. It is through these advocacy efforts, as well as coordinated testimonies before the Board of Education, conferences, and public hybrid meetings that CYLAC mobilizes youth for collective action. For young people who don’t feel qualified to participate in civic engagement, CYLAC provides an environment where they can develop the necessary skills and confidence under the guidance of more seasoned members.

The opportunity to work alongside peers from diverse backgrounds creates a supportive community where youth can learn from each other, share their perspectives, and grow as advocates. As noted, many young people are aware of critical issues like mental health challenges and environmental concerns. CYLAC provides an outlet to translate this awareness into action, helping youth put their knowledge and passion into meaningful change.

Though relatively new, CYLAC is an opportunity for Connecticut’s youth to ensure their perspectives are included in decisions that will shape their future. Through organizations like CYLAC, we believe we can amplify our voices and create change together.



The Amity Trident

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CORRECTIONS

In the February 2025 issue of *The Trident*, the author of the article “A Wave of Executive Orders by President Donald Trump Is Impacting Students and Education” was misprinted. The correct author of this article is Armaan Shrivastav ‘27. *The Trident* staff apologizes to Armaan for this error.

The photo attached to the article “The Weight Room Welcomes You!” was misattributed. The correct photographer is Ziyang Zhang ‘27. *The Trident* staff apologizes to Ziyang for this error.



Students Travel to Québec

Memories Created and New Culture Discovered

by Claire Theiss '26

with world language teachers Ashley Caron and Sandra Goncalves all traveled to Québec City, Canada. After leaving Woodbridge on a chilly Friday morning at 5 am, the group took an eight-hour-long bus ride before arriving in Québec City. They stayed in the city for three full days, and throughout that time were able to immerse themselves in a new culture.

Caron puts it best, explaining, "Every single year I've taken students to Québec with me they've always come back with a very special anecdote of an authentic experience."

This was especially true this year with students having fond memories of both planned and unplanned adventures.

Phoebe Halsey '26 said, "Ice skating in the forest felt really magical."

Freshmen Alina Konezny and Madeleine Caron shared a favorite memory of exploring Québec City while a blizzard swept through. However, no trip goes perfectly. After dog sledding, the group's bus got stuck in the snow while trying to maneuver out of a parking lot. While initially frustrating for some, this experience became junior Joshua Rosewater's favorite memory.

During the first half of the February break, approximately 20 students along

Rosewater said, "My favorite memory in Québec was digging our bus out of the snow," he said, adding that fellow juniors Zach Marrsucci, William Keenan, and Jonah Konezny helped out. "Our JBL speaker made the experience fun."

The experiences of snow tubing, ice skating, shopping,

reason why the trip remains so meaningful to Caron, who has taken students to Québec City six times.

She explains, "I love the trip so much because of the immersive experience students gain from Québec being a francophone region, but also the cultural immersion because of the weather. Students must acquiesce to the frigid environment, which results in an endearing experience where students can bond."

Students on the trip also gained new perspectives when it came to specific aspects of Québécois culture.

Halsey says, "I was surprised by the kindness of the French-Canadian people when we went to the sugar shack. Everybody that worked there was very inviting and welcoming to our group, making the experience much better."

When it came to actually speaking French, students were able to learn about the differences between the Québécois accent compared to the "traditional" French accent.

Alina Konezny, who lived in France for a year, reflects, "I learned more about the accents because the Québécois accent is very different from the regular French accent, spoken in France."

Students were able to come together and bond over unforgettable experiences while immersing themselves in the culture of Québec. They expressed gratitude for the opportunity to have such an experience.



Photo contributed by Eliza Rathjens '26

Students on the Québec trip pose in front of an ice sculpture.

and going out to eat, beyond serving as entertainment, allowed students to also experience the Québécois culture.

This opportunity for cultural immersion is part of the

Word Mash Answers from the February Issue!

1. Green Eggs and Hamlet 2. Fleetwood Mac and cheese 3. Unicornithology 4. The Tridentist 5. King Konga line

Science Research Finds Success at Recent Fairs

by Sabrina Osowiecki '25

Designed to teach students about scientific research through both instruction and hands-on experience, Amity's Science Research Program (SRP) is a community of students pursuing a wide range of interests within the STEM fields, from meteorology to medicine. After conducting their novel experiments or engineering original devices, they attend science fairs throughout February and March.

As a regional science fair founded in 2001, the Connecticut STEM Fair (CT-STEM) draws over 250 students to compete over Zoom. It involves research across multiple scientific disciplines, including behavioral, environmental, health, and physical. Amity students also competed in the Connecticut Science and Engineering Fair (CSEF). Founded in 1949, it is the largest and most prestigious science fair in Connecticut, encompassing the research of 407 students from 91 schools and organizations. 11 of the 18 Amity students competing at CSEF were chosen as finalists and two placed in their respective categories.

Elena Huber '27 was thrilled when she won first place in the Environmental category at CT-STEM and was selected to advance to CSEF.

"I found out through my friends since they had joined the virtual Zoom [award] ceremony the fair had," she recalls. "Initially, I screamed and my mom thought I got hurt."

She was chosen as a Life Science finalist at CSEF for her research, which

focuses on the use of essential oil in the control of fungi that cause spot blotch disease in barley plants.

"I would also like to write a research paper with the help of my mentor and get it published in a scientific journal," she says.

Similarly, Aryan Shrivastav '27 won first place in the Health category at CT-STEM with his vest designed to monitor vital signs for use in Chronic Obstruc-

This novel device won her numerous awards, including a scholarship to UConn and another to the University of New Haven.

"CSEF was really fun!" Deng reflects.

"The day of the competition was super hectic but getting to present my project and meet people from other schools was super cool."

Also receiving a scholarship to UNH, Mila Mejnartowicz '26 was chosen as a CSEF Life Science finalist for the second year in a row.

"My project was to determine whether the antidepressant ketamine would be effective in treating veterans with comorbid PTSD and substance use disorders," Mejnartowicz says.

She intends to continue her project next year and hopes to attend CSEF again.

Becoming a finalist in the Life Science category, Cathy Lee '25 won first place in the Petit Family Foundation Women

in STEM category for her solar-powered water filtration device utilizing a plant for filtration, known as phytoremediation. As a graduating senior, Lee values her experiences in SRP.

"I plan on pursuing a career in the research field so the program was a great introduction to my future," she comments.

"I really recommend it to rising freshmen and sophomores!"

Overall, the Science Research Program has been incredibly successful at science fairs this year. Moving forward, students will be attending the UBRISE fair and Year One students will be competing at their first fair later this month.



Photo contributed by Stan Osowiecki

Amity students celebrate at the CSEF award ceremony

tive Pulmonary Disease diagnoses. He enjoyed his experience at CSEF as well, becoming a Computational Biology and Bioinformatics finalist.

"Presenting my research to experienced judges, who were not only knowledgeable but also genuinely interested in my work, was both inspiring and rewarding," he says.

Junior Joy Deng was chosen as a Physical Science, Applied Technology, and Biotechnology finalist at CSEF.

"My project this year is engineering painless microneedle patches and wireless Bluetooth electronics to integrate into an insulin pump for diabetes patients," she explains.

Word Mash

by Olivia Cummings '26

Two clues are provided that lead to two specific words or phrases which can be combined phonically. The clues are in order of which phrase goes first.

Example

Clues: Small furry mammal + capital of the Netherlands
Answer: Hamsterdam

Famous groundhog + political process in the Senate to delay vote on a bill

American rapper + Greek half-man half-horse

Teddy Roosevelt's addition to the Monroe doctrine + retired Celtics basketball player

Extinct flying reptile + common pain reliever

Group of lions + US state

Answer key will be provided along with more Word Mash in the May issue.

Write for the Trident!
Next meeting after school
Tuesday, April 8.
Join us!

Jessie Zheng Wins Coca-Cola Scholarship

An Interview with The Trident

by Aitan Herman '28

The Coca-Cola scholarship is a competitive scholarship awarded to 150 high school seniors each year to support them financially for college or their future.

Each recipient of this award is given \$20,000 to support their education. The goal of the scholarship is to recognize people who do positive things around the community and in their schools.

Jessie Zheng is a senior at Amity Regional High School, president of the mock trial club, and a Disney Dream Academy Participant. She has won many other scholarships as well such as the Alexander Hamilton Scholarship.

She also worked in the CT Legislative branch to pass a bill that says Asian history must be taught in schools. Jessie is also the recipient of the Coca-Cola Scholarship. Below are excerpts from an interview with Jessie about this experience.

Asian history has to be taught in K through 12 grades. The other organization that I founded was Connected Speech in Action, which does a lot of volunteering and just provides opportunities for students who are in debate. Just because, you know, debate tournaments and model and Model UN conferences often have very high entry fees.



Photo contributed by Jessie Zheng '25

Q: What was the Application Process like for getting the Coca-Cola Scholarship?

A: It was a very rigorous process. So basically, there are three phases. The Coca-Cola Scholarship opens in around September or so. And then it's due at the end of September. So basically, the initial step is for you to apply to become a semifinalist for the Coca-Cola scholarship. That application is super simple. It doesn't require any essays at all. But what you would do is fill in that information with your extracurriculars. Afterward, after the semifinalist round, then you have to write the essays. You also have to write up your extracurricular descriptions, and they can be up to 100 words each for the extracurricular descriptions. For the final process, they ask you a bunch of different questions. They have long essays and short answer questions as well, and I think this year they had questions like, If you had an extra hour in the day, what would you do with that or like, what's a project that you're working on currently, or something like that.

Q: What are ways you have made a significant impact in your school and community?

A: I want to go into law to become a policy analyst. I did a lot of things in our State legislature to pass laws, and work on bills that are important to youth. So, for example, two years ago, when I was a sophomore, I worked on a law that passed. Basically, it requires that

Q: How did you learn about the Coca-Cola Scholarship?

A: I found out through people who won last year. The person that I found out through is going to Harvard right now, and last year she won Coke scholars. I was like, Oh, that seems cool. I'll make sure to apply this year. I didn't think I'd get it, but here we are!

Q: Why did you choose to apply for the Coca-Cola Scholarship?

A: Well, I'm going to be the first person in my family to attend college. During that time when I was applying to college, I didn't think that I would get a lot of financial aid. I ended up getting a lot more financial aid than I thought, which is helpful. But I guess one of the other cool things about the Coca-Cola scholarship is that you're receiving a \$20,000 scholarship and you're allowed to take out money anytime between like when you receive it and 10 years in the future.

Q: How did being the recipient of the Coca-Cola Scholarship affect you personally and how may it affect you later on in life?

A: I think it'll probably definitely give me lifelong friendships. It's just like, really cool, just having these random connections with people just because of the things that you're a part of.



March Mammal Madness: APES Edition

by Olivia Cummings '26

As March Madness sweeps over the basketball capital of the world, and brackets are furiously being filled out with favorite teams and rivals, another kind of bracket is being realized in the back corner of Amity. One that's a bit more... furry?

March Mammal Madness is a science-based competition where animals face off in simulated battles based on real-world traits. The annual tournament, created by biologist Dr. Katie Hinde at Arizona State University, takes the competitive energy of March Madness and applies it to the animal kingdom. Instead of teams, the tournament has a mix of well-known animals, like polar bears and hedgehogs, along with lesser-known competitors, such as the tayra or the quokka.

At Amity, AP Environmental Science students are already invested. The tournament serves as a welcome break from the usual coursework.

"It's such a fun activity to be a part of, and a nice break from some of the more serious topics in class," says Sophie Cohen '26.

Bold predictions are flying: "The narwhal is going to destroy the yak," claims Charlotte Stannard '26.

Amity Environmental Science teacher, Alison Nork, says this is why she introduces the competition to students every year. "I love seeing how invested students become in looking up different traits and characteristics. It's a lot of fun."

Nork also sees the competition from an educator's perspective; "It introduces students to a variety of animals, plants, and other organisms that they may have never heard of before, and they have the opportunity to learn while making March less boring."

With each bracket update, students look forward to the entertaining short videos narrating the matchups.

But March Mammal Madness isn't just for APES students—anyone can join. So, the next time you find yourself anxiously waiting for your favorite basketball team's next game, check out the latest battles between the fiercest (and fluffiest) competitors this spring.



Photo contributed by Arizona State University

The March Mammal Madness Logo

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Amity Creative Theatre Makes Their Final Preparations to Go “Under the Sea”

by Blake Wegman '26

Since the spring is now upon us, this year's musical, *The Little Mermaid* this year, is opening on Friday, April 4. The musical perfectly represents creativity, collaboration, and a striving work ethic done by our fellow Amity students. These qualities combine to create one of the most memorable and popular events during the entire school year, showing excellence in all aspects of life at Amity.

Philip Dolan, Amity's band teacher and the one who organizes and conducts the entire orchestra for the musical, explained the excitement for the upcoming musical.

He remarked, “We are heading in the busiest time of production this week, and the students are excited to perform!”

Although this process will be the most stressful, he stated that this work is worthwhile since the musical is always praised and extremely popular in the Amity community and beyond. Dolan also emphasized the commitment of the students involved and the amount of time and energy they are putting into the production of their music.

These students have been practicing and rehearsing since January, with rehearsals happening every week during that time.

Additionally, one student, junior William Keenan, expressed that the great work the student orchestra is doing shows their dedication to the entire process. He said, “The preparation is a lot of work, but it's easier when everyone else around you is also putting in the same amount of effort.”

The selfless individuals involved all give up their evenings to prepare in a way that will create

the best possible musical for the numerous audiences.

Furthermore, rehearsals are just scratching the surface of the hours of practice time that not only the orchestra is putting in, but all of the students involved in the preparation of the musical in general.

The thing that resonates most throughout this experience was the long hours and tireless work done by not only the students, but also the involved faculty, parents, and other staff. The process of putting together a musical is a very arduous task that requires total commitment, something many people shy away from.

However, these wonderful people involved in the musical show how rewarding this experience can be. They stand out as pillars of what our community can accomplish if we work together and give up our time for a good cause.

As the musical gets closer, the time that people like Dolan have to spend on the preparation only increases. However, a group of organized and dedicated people like the ones in the Amity Creative Theater program have all of the right values and tools to accomplish something incredible.

Senior Ben Gavaletz, a member of the ensemble, appreciates the support of the ACT community and commented on how they value both old and new members. “There is no small role, and everyone has their moment to shine,” he said.

Kyleigh Sand, who works with hair and makeup, agrees, saying, “It's been a great experience!”

Make sure to show support for our hardworking spartans involved in the musical, and buy your tickets before they inevitably sell out.



Photo from Disney.com

Image of Disney's hit animated film “The Little Mermaid.” Come out to see Amity's version which opens on Friday, April 4.

Join the cast and crew for performances on April 4, 5, 10 and 11 at 7:30 pm and for two special matinee performances on April 5 and 6 at 2:00 pm for a special matinee performance.

Following the matinee Ariel and her friends will be on hand for photos and autographs! Tickets at www.amitytheaterdepartment.com/events.

Theatre Stage Crew: What Goes on Behind the Curtains

by Jake Ricciardi '26

With *The Little Mermaid* musical performed by the Amity Creative Theater (ACT) coming up this week, more people should realize all of the work going on behind the scenes besides just the actors themselves.

One of the most integral parts of any musical or play is the stage crew who have a list of tasks like making a multitude of props, building and painting the set, practicing moving around the set for each scene, and, of course, actually moving around the set when the musical is being performed.



Photo contributed by Vivianna Pfannenbecker '26

Props being assembled by stage crew.

The ACT and its stage crew is no different. Every member is just as important as the next to making sure everything

for the musical is properly prepared and that the musical is performed smoothly.

In fact, with *The Little Mermaid* in particular, more of the actors are also helping move the set around to make scene transitions even smoother.

One Amity student that is a part of the theater program and the stage crew is Olivia Parks '26. Already having several friends that are acting in the musical, Parks believed that it would be fun to be with them while also having a new experience. However, she did not want to be an actor and preferred the work backstage, so she figured that the stage crew would be the best fit for her.

Parks was in the ACT as a freshman as well, but she was in the costume crew rather than stage crew. Despite that, she still wanted to come back and help with the *Little Mermaid* due to the love she has for the people around her in the community.

Having stated that “everyone is always so welcoming and it's always so fun to be a part of production,” it is not much of a surprise that Parks came

back and wants to do this again next year. The people simply make the entire experience a wonderful one.

Parks also believes that others should join the stage crew and help in the making and production of these great musicals and plays by the ACT. “It's an amazing experience and it's a great opportunity to meet new people and try out something new,” she said.

Those who do join get to learn so much in a new experience that they might have never been in otherwise, while having a blast with everyone around them.

Although the musical has not been performed yet at the time of this article's writing, one can assume that the ACT will put on a jaw-dropping show, as they often do. Seeing their long record of awards, it is no surprise that people have high hopes for ACT's *The Little Mermaid*, but it is almost guaranteed that they will deliver on those hopes.

An enthusiastic, driven group of the stage crew and the rest of the ACT will make sure to make *The Little Mermaid* a must-see musical for everybody.

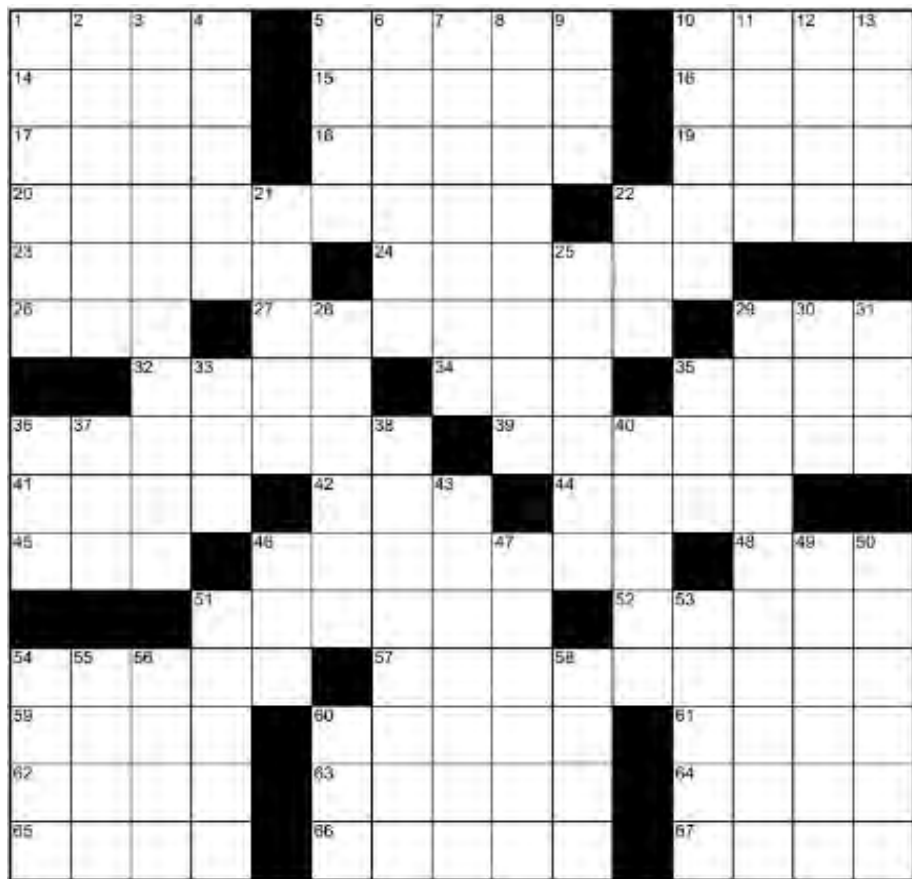


Photo contributed by Ben Gavaletz '25

The cast gets all dressed up before the show!

The Little Mermaid Opens April 4!

April Crossword



ACROSS

- 1. Pelvic Inflammatory Diseases (for short)
- 5. moved gradually, furtively
- 10. Ancient Roman baby name meaning "bean tree"
- 14. "I got this" (two words)
- 15. Normal reaction to something scary/frightening
- 16. Biblical Garden of _____
- 17. Major insurance provider for military personnel, veterans, and their families (acronym)
- 18. Iowa Senator Joni _____

- 19. quiet, shy
- 20. Famous Dutch Golden Age painter and graphic designer
- 22. Animal associated with Easter
- 23. Prefix meaning "twenty," usually used for shapes
- 24. It's on April 20th this year
- 26. National Testing Network, for short
- 27. Big number with a "B"
- 29. Only mammal that can actually fly
- 32. Owing money, the US has a lot of it
- 34. Offered Americans a "New Deal, for short
- 35. Symbol of company or organization

DOWN

- 1. Flood through synonym (two words)
- 2. Bugs with six legs and two wings
- 3. Attempt to bring the diamond market to the digital space (word + acronym)
- 4. Attack with a sharp weapon, "take some _____ at it"
- 5. Song by Blanca Paloma, 2x the developers of FIFA, Madden, & NBA 2K
- 6. Poisonous plant resembling and growing alongside wheat
- 7. Wizard protagonist in Lord of the Rings
- 8. Opposite westside

- 9. Dihydrotestosterone acronym
- 10. Longest, strongest, and heaviest bone in human body
- 11. Yemeni City, namesake of gulf connecting Red Sea and Arabian Sea
- 12. Has _____ (4 letters), usually meaning someone or something that "was once good"
- 13. Very dark, like ink
- 21. Jewish scholar or teacher, title 22. Franklin, whose face is one the \$100 dollar bill
- 25. Rotational analogue of force, taught in Physics
- 28. (two words) _____ Final Countdown
- 29. French phrase used as a salutation to someone about to eat
- 30. Before, "long _____"
- 31. Toxic, for short
- 33. A particular period of time, usually referenced for sports
- 35. Great, "Fire," "It's going to be _____"
- 36. To cry loudly
- 37. Spotted close to Area 51
- 38. Liquid used to treat eye conditions
- 40. Famous rock form in Australia
- 43. When Economic Development Administration leaves (acronym + word)
- 46. Until, for short
- 47. Selling CDs for a cheaper price
- 49. Melt down, reshape a metal object
- 50. Volley position whose job it is to "set up" the ball for a spike
- 51. Capital of Belarus
- 53. Mountains separating Europe from Asia
- 54. Son of Adam and Eve, said to be the first murderer
- 55. Number used to mark location of text in books
- 56. capital of Latvia
- 58. Abbreviation of the announcement when South Dakota scores a touchdown
- 60. Florida State University, for short

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Artist of the Month: Lucy Jiang

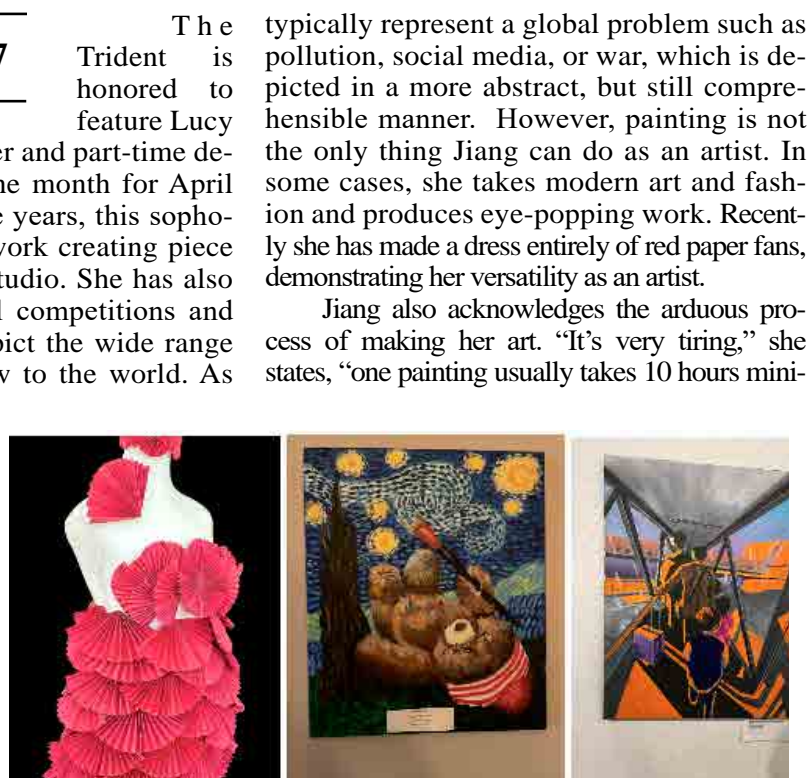
by Victoria Pelton '27

Jiang, a traditional painter and part-time designer, as the artist of the month for April 2025. For more than five years, this sophomore had been hard at work creating piece after piece at her local studio. She has also been involved in annual competitions and showcases which all depict the wide range of skill she gets to show to the world. As time goes on, her paintings seem to get more clean and detailed.

"My style of painting and drawing is more concentrated on fine lines and shades of color," she says, referencing Future Horizons, one of her recent works.

This painting draws the viewer in, depicting a bright orange light bathing the soon-to-be passengers of an airplane. Jiang explains the piece "was made as a demonstration of how one color demonstrates the light and how that can be applied in painting" and exhibits this in her work expertly. The name of the painting is derived from happenings in the image. Jiang depicts the beauty and unpredictability of travel in this work, setting up the story of a family going to see a foreign place.

Additionally, she makes various paintings in order to send a message to her audience. Those she submits to competitions



typically represent a global problem such as pollution, social media, or war, which is depicted in a more abstract, but still comprehensible manner. However, painting is not the only thing Jiang can do as an artist. In some cases, she takes modern art and fashion and produces eye-popping work. Recently she has made a dress entirely of red paper fans, demonstrating her versatility as an artist.

Jiang also acknowledges the arduous process of making her art. "It's very tiring," she states, "one painting usually takes 10 hours mini-

mum," she said. Her dedication to her art is truly admirable, but one also has to understand the amount of patience it takes to paint and craft.

However, once she finishes a project, she describes feeling similar to "when you finish an essay for school or a big project," having been able to make something "tangible" out of her creative ideas. This degree of creativity is rare to find in a person, especially one as versatile as Jiang is. Her work truly stands out and has the potential to inspire many others down the line.

Springing into Action

Athletes Warm Up as Final Season Approaches

by Rohan Hebbar '27

With spring in the air, this year's athletes are warming up to play in the final sports season of the year. For many years, sports have always been a big part of Amity, and this year will be no different.

Through sports such as baseball, lacrosse, and track and field, Amity will be competing in the Southern Connecticut Conference (SCC) division tournament and hopefully in the state-wide tournament as well.

In early March, all of the spring athletes met in the gymnasium to learn vital information about their respective sport regarding safety, opportunities, expectations, and much more. After attending the meeting, sophomore volleyball player Shane Grogan emphasized the great importance of camaraderie as a team.

"I feel that the meeting was a great refresher to remind each one of us returning players the sense of family and community among us. It was a great time to see familiar faces from last season and a time to meet new potential teammates," Grogan said.

Additionally, Coach Michael Bullers of the boys tennis team commented, "It was great seeing all the parents and student athletes at the spring sports meeting. I am definitely looking forward to a wonderful season for Amity Boys Tennis!"

Whether it's running on the track or playing on the court, coaches and athletes alike are absolutely psyched for this upcoming season.

Track and field, one of the most popular spring sports, had an abundance of athletes attend

their meeting this year. When asked about how the spring sports meeting impacted the team as a whole, Charlie Stabach '27 replied, "I feel it definitely set the standard for both the incoming and the current track athletes as to what everyone should expect for our work ethic and responsibilities as student athletes.

"Overall, it had a beneficial impact on the entire team, and I'm excited to see what we can accomplish this season," Stabach added.

Boys tennis captain Dariush Raisi '25 agreed with Grogan and Stabach, stating, "The meeting created a sense of community before the season. Everyone tried to push forward a message of respect and positivity, helping the team as a whole, while also setting forth goals and high expectations for all athletes."

Sophomore Shriya Garg, a member of the



Photo contributed by Ian Stoltenberg '25

This year's freshman competing at the Jambar Coaches HOF Invitational Race

girls tennis team, is looking forward to the upcoming season. "Our team is very supportive, and I really enjoy it," said Garg. "We've already had a scrimmage, and our first match is next week against West Haven. We beat them last year, but they're solid competition."

Amity spring sports are definitely looking sharp, and we cannot wait to see the teams' successes and accomplishments this upcoming season. Check the school website for dates of matches and games.

Boys Ice Hockey Celebrates a Season of Success

by Akshay Bulsara '26
and Tyler Frantz '26

As the Amity Boys Ice Hockey season comes to a close, the Spartans reflect on their major success throughout the season. Not only did they win the Southern Connecticut Conference (SCC) Championship and make it to the semi-finals of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference, but they also showed determination by winning their senior night on March 1st. This game added to their overall positive record for the season and played a big role in punching their ticket into the SCC Championship as the number one-seeded team.

Though they did not clinch the title, many feel the season was still a success.

Led by captains Eli Gregory '25 and Mike Page '25, the Spartans defeated the West Haven Blue Devils 3 to 1. Goals were scored by Gregory, Page, and Christian Costanzo '26.

Gregory reflected on this season's experience and his time as captain. "I am honored to have been part of this year's hockey team and to be able to serve as a captain," he said. "The bond this team had was unreal and unlike any other team I have played on. Even though we didn't accomplish our final goal, we still had a great season."

When asked about senior night, Costanzo responded, "Senior night was great. Everyone was excited and happy to be there. The seniors played for their family and the stu-

dent section... The whole team was very happy to be there and happy for their senior boys."

It's clear that Costanzo believed that this game was bigger than just the score, but was for the



Photo contributed by @amityspartanshockey Instagram account

Amity Spartans win Southern Connecticut Conference Championship for the first time in fifteen years.

seniors in the program.

Cam Levy '25 also had a similar response when asked about senior night. He stated, "You just had to be there... because the boys all came together and played a great hard game and it felt special to feel a part of a brotherhood like that.

Levy believed that the game was bigger than just the results, but about the brotherhood that they

were playing for, a special feeling that the Boys Hockey program has on the players.

When asked about senior captains Gregory and Page, Costanzo also had nothing but positive things

to say. "I loved how Mike was a person I could talk to, and Eli was the person to make sure people were at the rink in time and set the tone for us to be focused on the season," he said. "They were almost like big brothers to the team and me."

When asked about his captains, Kevin Gu '26 added, "This year's captains exhibited great leadership in different ways. Both led the team

as a whole while also focusing on individuals when needed."

Overall, this, combined with the notable efforts from each of the seniors, brought the team up together and created and maintained an incredibly wholesome family throughout the season." Gu's beliefs add to the idea of how crucial the Spartans' captains were.

The Boys Ice Hockey captains this year were a critical part of the team, not only proving their skills in important games but also through their leadership skills, which carried them through countless close battles. These boys have left big shoes to fill for next year's captains, and they hope that the program continues to excel and continue to win more titles.

Not only have senior captains Gregory and Page left a lasting impact on the Spartans players and program, but they have also led the team, consisting of seven other seniors, to success.

Seniors John Kennedy, AJ Capecelatro, Cody Rocchio, Cam Levy, Connor Bunnell, Benjamin Stannard, and Asher Furman have all given their heart to the program and created unforgettable memories with each other, most of which consisted of growing up and playing on youth teams together.

The boys' record-breaking season came to a close after a tough battle at the Quinnipiac M&T Bank Arena. They will continue to work hard during the offseason and be back next winter, ready to give it all again.

Clubs Collaborate for Dodgeball Competitive FUNdraiser

by Teesha Godawat '27

On March 12, the Student Government of the freshman class and Class Act collaborated in arranging a dodgeball tournament to raise money for their organizations. This was a fun and thrilling way to get students to get together to play a fun game for a good cause.

The tournament took place in the Main Gym

from 2:00 to 4:30 pm, and prices were set at five dollars per person and 25 dollars per team of five to eight people.

Members of Class Act and the freshman class student government refereed the games, where a total of 17 teams signed up to play.

"Some teams dropped out last minute, however, we still saw many students show up ready to play and win," said freshman student government representative Rudra Trivedi '28.

In total, the two groups combined made around 250 dollars together, and they split the revenue evenly, with each group making around 125 dollars. Participants brought their best efforts and good spirits, making the tournament exciting yet competitive.

Freshman class president, Jacob Klee said, "I was delighted to see the turnout and happy with the money raised. It was just great to see school spirit showcased during this event. To me, this was more of a FUNdraiser rather than a FUNdraiser."

Overall, this FUNdraiser was definitely a great way for students to spend

their time and connect with others.

The two teams that played one another in the semifinals were sophomore Taylor MacNamara's team and junior Joey Puglisi's team. MacNamara's team played under the name "Team Five", and Puglisi's team played as "The Winners."

The members of Team Five were MacNamara, Maggie Maloney '27, Ava Ruskowski '28, Celine Ding '28, Kate Bussert '28, Caroline Delprete '27, and Reena Platonov '28.

They played against The Winners, whose members were Brennan Camus '25, Robbie Solsbury '25, Jake Bogunecki '27, Collin Tenney '25, Rob Pulie '25, Derek Porto '25, Dylan Agvent '25, Carlo Lombardi '25, and Puglisi.

Solsbury has always enjoyed events such as this one. "Over the past few years, I have participated in three dodgeball tournaments," he said, "and I think it's a great mix of good sportsmanship and competition. I think more people should participate in this fun event."

Camus agreed, saying, "The dodgeball tournament was really fun to be a part of. To see everyone come together and donate towards Class Act was a privilege, and the competition made for such a good experience!"

All the girls on Team Five were members of the Girls Swim and Dive team, and The Winners were all members of the Boys Baseball team.

By the end, with Maloney being the last one standing against the rest of The Winners team, she was struck out, leaving the victory for The Winners; the prize was five dollars for each member of their team.

Even with the close game, Maloney said, "It was a really fun and competitive experience. Even though the baseball team was intimidating, our team was still able to make it to the finals. Everyone seemed to be engaged in the tournament, whether they were watching or playing."

It is safe to say that both Class Act and Freshmen Student Government put together a profitable and successful event that allowed students to participate in their community while supporting their classmates.



Contributed by @amity_classactcouncil Instagram account.

Dodgeball Tournament champions! Congratulations to all. Pictured above are Brennan Camus '25, Robbie Solsbury '25, Jake Bogunecki '27, Collin Tenney '25, Rob Pulie '25, Derek Porto '25, Dylan Agvent '25, Carlo Lombardi '25, and Joey Puglisi '26.

Want to Win a Million Dollars?

by Isabella Smernoff '27

There is a one-in-a-hundred-and-twenty-billion-dollar chance that creating a March Madness bracket could win you a million dollars. If you are unsure what that means, March Madness is a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I basketball tournament that takes place throughout March.

The tournament is single elimination and composed of 68 men's teams and 68 women's teams, all of whom are hoping to win a national title. Those teams are then further broken into 4 regions (East, West, Midwest, and South) where they are seeded from 1 to 16. The progression of the tournament games is a round of 64, a round of 32, the Sweet 16, the Elite 8, the Final 4, and the much-anticipated championship game.

The first men's tournament began in 1939, and the first women's in 1982. The growing popularity of basketball expanded the tournament into the beloved event it is today.

Many fun national traditions exist involving March Madness, including bracket challenges, team watch parties, and selection Sundays, where the NCAA reveals the tournament brackets the Sunday before the tournament begins.

Eric Rothbart, a member of the physical education department ex-

plained, "My family and I are huge UConn Husky fans because my grandmother has always been an avid game watcher and Husky. We love to have parties with friends and family where we eat lots of good food and enjoy the March Madness games."

"The March Madness season is super important to me because I am passing on the watchparty tradition to my son, Jackson, and I am extremely excited to see how UConn will do in this year's tournament," Rothbart added.

This year's prospective tournament showcases a lot of talent from a variety of areas of the country for both men's and women's basketball. A few notable teams for the 2025 men's tournament are the Duke Blue Devils, Florida Gators, UConn Huskies, and the Houston Cougars. Some of these competing men's NCAA teams also hold basketball stars like Duke's Cooper Flagg, Florida's Walter Clayton Jr., and Auburn's Johni Broome.

These teams and players will bring excitement to all the games they are involved in, and it will be interesting to see how things play out for this year's men's tournament. In the previous 2024 and 2023 men's tournaments, the UConn Huskies were able to clinch two national titles in a row and add to their overall six national titles.

For the Women's 2025 tournament, some teams to watch are the UCLA Bruins, South Carolina Gamecocks, and the Texas Longhorns. Also, some notable women's tournament players include Paige



Photo from uconnhuskies.com

University of Connecticut Women's Basketball Team

Bueckers (UConn), Hannah Hidalgo (Notre Dame), and Aziaha James (NC State).

Jaden Skopp '27 said, "My favorite women's collegiate basketball player is Paige Bueckers. She is a great all-around player and also an impactful person when it comes to caring for her teammates. Go Huskies!"

The 2024 women's March Madness tournament was won by USC Gamecocks, and the 2023 tournament by the LSU Tigers. The 2025 March Madness tournaments will be exciting for men's and women's basketball fans.

The games are available through CBS Sports, Hulu+ Live TV, Max, and YouTube. Good luck to all the competing NCAA teams this year, and enjoy the March Madness season!



STUDENT GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Are you interested in representing the needs of your fellow students? Do you want the opportunity to make the changes your class needs? If so, you should consider running to be a part of Amity Student Government!

The application to be on your class ballot is now open. The application link was sent to your amityregion5 email and a QR code for the form is included below.

If you are interested in running for the 2025–2026 school year, make sure to complete this application before April 18th at 11:59 PM. No late submissions will be accepted.

2025 Election Timeline:

April 1st
Ballot application
opens



April 18th
Ballot applications
are due at 11:59 PM



April 22nd
Official election



**Any questions? If so, please reach out
to Alex Klee or Mr. Downhour!**

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peter.downhour@amityregion5.org