

THE AMITY TRIDENT

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Student-Led Protest Sparks Large Turnout at Recent Board of Education Meeting

by Andie Napolitano '24 and Emily Russo '24

Editors' Note: This article does not contain student comments for confidentiality reasons.

A student-led protest on Friday, February 2nd sparked a large turnout at the Amity Board of Education Meeting on Monday, February 12th. The student-led protest, which was held in both the career center and main office, consisted of a group of students intending to protest against the presence of military recruitment officers and the perceived lack of freedom of speech at Amity.

According to section 8d of the Amity Regional High School Student Handbook, participating in a walkout, sit-in, or other unauthorized demonstration on school property and inciting others to participate in a walkout, sit-in or other unauthorized demonstration on school property are breaches of conduct that can result in disciplinary action.

However, students are still able to exercise their First Amendment right to protest by coordinating their efforts with the administration beforehand to prevent disruptions to the academic process.

In 2022, students staged a sit-in protest during school hours, working with the Amity administration to coordinate this demonstration. Per the Student Handbook's policies, those who did not comply with the previously set parameters faced disciplinary action, while those who complied with these parameters did not. Additionally, the district is legally unable to disclose any disciplinary actions taken against students.

As a result of the most recent protest, some members of the Amity community turned to social media to voice their opinions and concerns. In his February 2nd Community Happenings

email, Principal Andre Hauser reminded the Amity community that "exciting accounts of controversies posted on social media are rarely accurate or complete."

He asked that "everyone use common sense, kindness, and good judgment in their decisions about what to post or comment about online."

Community members, including Amity students and parents, attended the Amity Board of Education meeting to voice their opinions on the protest, the ideas expressed by the protest, and other social issues during the public comment segment. Many comments made during public comment alluded to misinformation on social media about the intentions of the protest and the students participating in it.

After the Board of Education Meeting, multiple petitions were created. Both these petitions and social media misinformation contained untrue and hurtful information about Amity students and staff. While social issues and school policies sometimes spark disagreement, it is important to remember to be respectful to all parties when debating these issues, especially when they involve children.

Hauser wants to remind the Amity community that "we are a community, so we all deserve to be treated with respect, dignity, and honesty even by those with whom we strongly disagree."

The Trident supports Principal Hauser's message and encourages the Amity community to move forward with kindness, empathy, and an open-minded perspective.

Library Prepares for Much-Needed Renovation

by Ziyang Zhang '27

As the heart of the school, the library, is about to undergo a much-needed transformation at Amity Regional High School. Driven by a desire to create a more welcoming and functional space for students, the librarians Ken Clark and Victoria Hulse are spearheading a very comprehensive renovation project.

The impetus for this project arose from a confluence of factors. Concerns regarding the worn-out carpet and a growing need for increased space and modernized amenities prompted a meeting with school administrators. Recognizing the library's importance as a learning hub, they readily agreed to move forward with the renovation.

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Photo contributed by Ken Clark
Ken Clark (right) shows Leo Tregger '24 new furniture for the library.

April College Fair Offers Students Insight into Higher Education

by Aryan Shrivastav '27

Amity Regional High School is preparing to host a college fair aimed at helping its students gain insight into a number of colleges and universities.

Scheduled for Monday, April 29th, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM, in the gymnasium, the college fair serves as a platform for students to engage with admissions representatives from various colleges and universities. Paula Vallie, who works in the Career Center, highlighted the significance of this event, emphasizing the opportunity

it provides for students to gather essential information directly from the sources.

"The purpose of the college fair is for students to meet face-to-face with admission representatives to find out more information about what their colleges have to offer," Vallie explained. "It's a good time for that face-to-face contact with the college reps that students will be applying to."

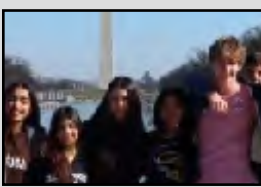
Representatives from approximately 120 colleges and universities nationwide, including prestigious institutions like Yale University and the University of

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College Fair Offers Insight into Higher Education

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Connecticut are expected to be present at the fair.

Additionally, representatives from state schools such as Southern, Western, Central, and Eastern Connecticut State Universities will be present, alongside military branches offering information about military service opportunities, and trade schools that will highlight their training programs designed to prepare students for a job in the skilled trades.

Students attending the fair can explore a range of topics, from academic programs and tuition costs to campus life and housing options. Vallie noted that the fair offers a valuable opportunity for students to ask relevant questions and gather brochures and other materials to aid in their decision-making process.

“Students can ask about majors offered, tuition costs,

housing options, and more,” Vallie said. “The representatives are there to provide information and engage with students on a personal level.”

Lynn Cocco, the college and career counselor, and Vallie emphasized the importance of research in the college selection process, encouraging students to explore various options and consider factors such as program offerings, campus culture, and financial aid opportunities.

“Research is key. You have to find the right fit for you,” Cocco advised. “It’s essential to visit campuses, talk to representatives, and gather as much information as possible.”

The college fair aims to enable students to make informed decisions about their future. By providing direct access to college representatives and resources, the fair serves as a valuable step in the college exploration process for students of all grade levels.



Photo contributed by Lynn Cocco

Amity’s 2023 College Fair

Library Renovations Planned

Continued from page 1

“Our vision is to create a library that’s inviting but flexible and comfortable,” shared Ken Clark, outlining their aspirations. “We want to reclaim lost space, offer dedicated areas for students to work on projects, and even introduce a recording studio for podcasting.”

The plan includes improved storage solutions and an office designated for the librarians.

Beyond these specific upgrades, the overarching goal is to transform the library into a vibrant space for multiple purposes. This aligns with the librarians’ belief that the library should be a “visible learning and collaboration space” within the school, fostering engagement and a love of learning.

The exciting renovation is slated to begin next summer, 2025, and is estimated to take 3-4 months. While the library will likely not be fully operational when the school year starts, the librarians are committed to minimizing disruptions and ensuring smooth access to essential resources.

Funding for the project will come from the district, with the school also pursuing a school construction grant to recoup some of the costs. This collaborative effort demonstrates the commitment to creating this valuable resource for students and staff.

While the library will have

limited access during the renovation, Hulse assures that decisions regarding book availability and access to library resources will be carefully considered to minimize disruption. The librarians have also sought student feedback to ensure the new space reflects their needs and preferences. Plans for new furniture are also in the works.

During the renovation, the architect will focus on addressing several key concerns. This includes enhancing the library’s aesthetics by replacing the outdated carpet, creating a quieter learning environment by installing acoustic paneling, and reclaiming previously lost space to increase the library’s usable area.

The enthusiasm surrounding this project is palpable. Clark and Hulse, along with the school community, eagerly anticipate the completion of the renovation, marking a new chapter for this essential learning space.

In anticipation of the renovation’s positive impact, Luna Lu ’27 shares her excitement, envisioning a more inviting space to attract more students. She suggests upgrades to amenities, additional group work-centric areas, and an enhanced overall ambiance.

Echoing this sentiment, Shoshi Huang, a substitute teacher and frequent library user, expresses optimism about the proposed changes, noting their unique and welcoming nature.

Principal’s Committee Column

by Aachal Gupta ‘25

The Principal’s Committee held its most recent meeting on February 16 at 7:00 AM. During this meeting, students had lively conversations about a variety of subjects, from possible school changes to addressing community comments.

Reviewing the comments from the most recent Board of Education meeting was the committee’s first task. Administrators provided information about how they are considering community views when making decisions, as well as their strategy for handling criticism. It was observed that unpleasant statements were made on both sides in sometimes acrimonious public comments. The Committee stressed the value of respectfully addressing concerns and having a healthy conversation, even though several people questioned the petitions’ efficacy.

The worries mentioned about military recruiters’ access to the school took up much of the meeting. The committee dispelled myths about the matter by emphasizing the importance of these kinds of opportunities for students. Additionally, there was an emphasis on the federal and state regulations governing the presence of military recruiters.

The recent substitute security guard and the policies in place for armed staff members at the school were also topics of discussion.

Apart from attending to the concerns of the community, the committee also concentrated on possible enhancements within the school. Students discussed whether to increase the number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses available in order to give students greater options for educational development. Members suggested additions like AP Human Geography and AP Macro/Micro Economics, making sure to take student interest and curricular alignment into account.

Concerns were voiced over the state of the facilities, including the restroom in the girls’ locker room. Members emphasized that upkeep is necessary to guarantee students are in a clean and hygienic environment. Plans to evaluate the facilities’ existing condition and allot funds for required renovations and repairs were deliberated.

Members decided to meet again on a bi-weekly schedule to talk more about ongoing projects and deal with new developments. The committee is still dedicated to encouraging open dialogue, attending to community issues, and putting alterations into place that will improve the general educational experience for both staff and students.

Una Noche Divertida Spanish National Honors Society Hosts Zumba Night

by Sarah Shaikh ‘25

The National Spanish Honors Society hosted a Zumba night on Friday, March 1st. Zumba combines Latin dances and exercises that originated in Columbia in the 1990s. This aerobic activity has increased in popularity across the world and throughout all age groups. The event provided refreshments and snacks, ultimately creating an environment that allowed people who love Zumba to participate in a fun and active night.

The NSHS has been holding a Zumba Night for the past few years to raise money in support of their sister school in Fair Haven. They raise money for their toy, food drives, and other events while promoting students’ physical and mental health, allowing them to decompress and relax while enjoying Latin rhythms.

Members promoted Zumba Night in advance so that students know exactly where and when the event will take place. During the event, each

member performs an integral part.

Claudia Mirci, the NSHS advisor, said, “Zumba Night allows students to be integrated with Latin culture and rhythm.”

This engaging event allows students from all grades to come and participate in a school event while supporting a charitable cause. Sofia Silva Rodriguez ‘24, NSHS President, said, “The event is very fun and simple. It is not as weird or embarrassing as it originally sounds. In the end, no one cares about how good or bad you dance. We’re just all dancing!”

This event demonstrates a dedication to the Spanish community. NSHS member Leonardo Tregger ‘24 said, “Zumba Night proved to be a great success. So many people showed up with much enthusiasm and I think that carried the mood for the whole night.”

This event welcomed all Amity students to have fun and excitement with their classmates and friends. The NSHS organizes this event to bring a joyful night of Zumba to the Amity community.



Photo contributed by the National Spanish Honors Society
Students dance at Zumba Night

Editorial

Embracing Womanhood

by Ellen Ko '24

Womanhood is an intricate mosaic formed by experiences of resilience, beauty, and complexity. Womanhood is beautiful. To me, womanhood is looking down at my wrist and seeing the hair tie you never bought. To me, womanhood is sitting outside and basking in the sun. To me, womanhood is my 10 step skincare routine. To me, womanhood is going shopping, but never wearing those shorts or that one shirt that will draw too much attention. To me, womanhood is walking back to my car with pepper spray attached to my keys. To me, womanhood is my hard work going unnoticed, while my male peers are applauded for the bare minimum. To me, womanhood is beautiful, but it can be so tiring.

As we enter Women's History Month, I wanted to not just to celebrate the accomplishments of women who have blazed trails before us, but also to reflect on all aspects of womanhood and the ongoing journey towards equality and empowerment. We stand on the shoulders of those who fought for our rights, yet we have to recognize that the path to full equality is still long and winding.

It's crucial to acknowledge the systemic barriers and societal constraints that continue to shape the experiences of women around the world. Women still face discrimination, harassment, and violence simply because of their gender. Despite progress in many areas,

these challenges persist, reminding us of the work that still needs to be done to create a more just and equitable world.

Yet, in the face of adversity, women continue to rise, reclaiming their power and shaping their own narratives. We find strength in solidarity, supporting one another in our shared journey towards liberation and equality. Together, we amplify each other's voices, advocate for change, and challenge the status quo.

As we commemorate Women's History Month, let us not only celebrate the achievements of the past but also recommit ourselves to the work ahead. Let us strive for a future where womanhood is defined by freedom, opportunity, and respect. May we continue to march forward with purpose, knowing that our collective efforts will shape a better world for generations to come.

We can appreciate the progress made by women while recognizing how far we still must go to achieve full equality, respect and safety in society. Women's diversity should be a source of pride, not prejudice.

This month we honor those who came before us and cleared the way for advancements. We support one another in boldly claiming womanhood's joys and complexities. And we continue marching toward justice, determined to shape a better future where womanhood is defined by freedom and not limited by fears or stereotypes. Though long, the road ahead is one we travel in solidarity and with purpose.

Why Social Media Fails When Reporting the News

by Alex Klee '25

I love Instagram. I love being able to share and memorialize my life in photos and captions with my bubble of followers. I love keeping up with what my friends are doing, no matter how many miles apart we are. I love watching meaningless Instagram reels: a mix of TikTok reposts and original gems. I love having the ability to share my thoughts with the world, and hear new perspectives from others that I lack in my local community.

However, I do not love the notion that it — or any other social media site—should serve as our primary news source.

According to Common Sense Media (CSM), over fifty-percent of teens in the US stay up-to-date on world happenings through social media. Of these teens that rely on social media in this manner, only half say it helps them better understand what is going on in the world, while twenty-percent say that it has only made them more confused about current events (CSM). This ever growing shift away from traditional, established news sources is turning social media platforms into information jungles for far too many teenagers.

Because of social media, events and developments in almost all parts of the world are now at our fingertips at all times. While this has expanded our horizons, it has also

overloaded our plates with a plethora of information being served to us at all times. While there is something to be said about how traditional media sources have incredible power in what they choose to put before their audience, the sheer volume of information and stories on social media platforms leads to a decline in the quality and trustworthiness of what we encounter.

Moreover, social media can divide the world into separate camps, creating subjective facts in siloed feeds. We've lost a unified, established common set of facts from expert, trusted, and trained journalists.

Some traditional media institutions, like the New York Times (NYT), Washington Post, and Wall Street Journal, have embraced social media. However, in turn, their posts often lack depth, offering mere headlines, while full articles are hidden behind paywalls. A recent headline from the NYT Instagram page announces, "CVS and Walgreens Will Begin Selling Abortion Pills This Month," which leaves viewers with an incomplete understanding of the story.

The full article on the NYT website explains that this change is only taking place in select states, a much different message than the one announced on Instagram and subsequently my friends' stories. With only headlines as the source of learning on social media platforms, every user feels like an expert, while their actual knowledge on a subject is shallow at best.

I love Instagram. However, this love is conditional. Social media platforms were originally meant to allow us to engage with one another online; we were supposed to keep up with friends, make connections, and share our lives. Now, social media has become a breeding ground for bold claims that lack proper context, depth, and oversight. Social media was never meant to be an information hub; it's simply not equipped to safely and responsibly be our source of current events.



The Amity Trident

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CORRECTIONS

In the February 2024 issue of The Trident, the author of "Science Research Enjoy 'Positive Experience' at CT STEM" was misprinted. The correct author is Armaan Shrivastav '27.

In the February 2024 issue of The Trident, the photo for to the article "The Weight Room Welcomes You!" was misattributed. The correct photographer is Ziyang Zhang '27.

The Trident staff apologizes for these errors.



Default to Kindness: Why We Need Empathy

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” - Maya Angelou.

by Jacqueline Miller '27

This quotation is often referenced, and this repetition can feel like it loses some of its importance, however although that may decrease its impact, it does not lessen its truth.

When we are faced with difficult circumstances and turn toward others to provide us with comfort, support is paramount. Our emotional connection with others fuels our actions. The foundation of a solid friendship is built from empathy and kindness. Empathy allows us to see situations from the perspective of our friends and peers; really, from anyone other than ourselves.

This life skill can promote understanding and patience. Juggling commitments such as homework, sports, clubs, and community service can be challenging and may even cause us to forget to carve out time for our friends. Empathy reminds us that even when we feel stressed, we have the reserve to be mindful of the feelings of others.

We all need to remember to default to kindness and empathize with others

especially in situations when the stress feels overwhelming. Taking time to take a moment to pause and regroup and see a situation from another’s point of view can lead to mutually beneficial results. This often makes you and the other person feel better. No one knows the narrative that another person hears in their own head, and empathy can help encourage us to consider the feelings of others. Empathy motivates us to care.

Our administration has recently emphasized the importance of respect for one another in our community, writing, “No matter what divides us at the moment, we are all people who are part of one large, diverse, and vibrant school community.” There is a special feeling of emotional comfort when you feel understood. The power of a friend’s words and behavior can make you feel supported and secure.

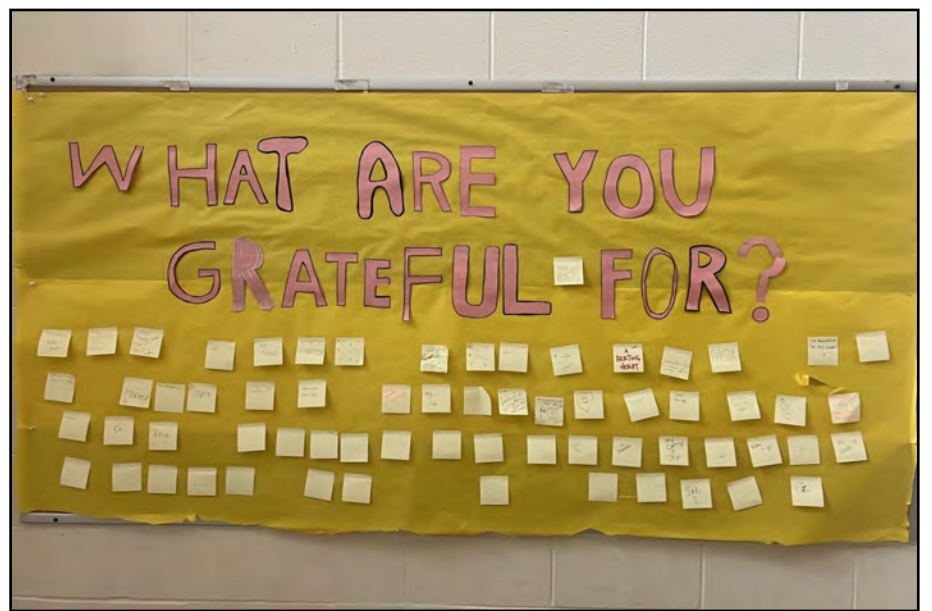
Furthermore, one of the crucial components of the Portrait of a Graduate is empathizer. “An empathizer is a learner who continuously grows their capacity to understand multiple perspectives.” This skill is part of a lifelong mission to be a good person and reminds us to respect differences and demonstrate compassion.

Some people insist that a person has to be born with empathy to be able to empathize, however even if being empathic does not come naturally, it is a skill that can—and must—be taught and learned.

A Celebration of Gratitude

The Student Government’s Community Outreach Committee and Amity Advocates Class collaborated on the Faculty Gratitude Project, an initiative intended to promote a more positive school environment. Earlier in the year, the Amity Advocates planned and organized a faculty breakfast to help boost morale among faculty.

This month, the Community Outreach Committee worked together to create a gratitude bulletin board using the bulletin board outside of the senior lounge. This initiative aims to promote a more positive school environment by encouraging Amity students and staff to share what they are grateful for. Members of the community can use the Post-it notes on the bulletin board to share positive messages and appreciation for others.



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Ernie's Pizza Noted as One of New Haven's Best Pizzerias

by Chloe Chang '27

Sauce, cheese, dough, pizza! Pizza has been regarded as a staple food in American culture now. Whether it is homemade or store-bought, there are a million different ways to classify what the best pizza is. What is one place that will never disappoint? New Haven! Recently, New Haven has earned the honor of being named Pizza Capital of the World, and Governor Ned Lamont chose Ernie's Pizzeria as the location to announce this honor.

There are many renowned pizza spots across New Haven, including Pepe's, Modern, Bar, and more. These pizza places are all able to find the perfect balance of dough, sauce, and toppings, and are highly regarded by all in Connecticut. To highlight another famous pizzeria, Ernie's Pizza has been widely appreciated and features long-standing recipes and pizza makers!

In the interview included below, history teacher Patrick Cumpstone, whose uncle-in-law owns Ernie's Pizza, shares the story of landmark: the success behind it, the history of New Haven's pizza-making, and the future of pizza.

Chang: What is your favorite dish at Ernie's Pizzeria? Why?

Cumpstone: Ernie's Pizzeria serves two types of food: salad and pizza. This speaks very much to the fact that it is a pizzeria dedicated to the craft of making good pizza, specifically



Photo contributed by Patrick Cumpstone
Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro tries her hand at pizza-making with Pasqual De Riso's help at the restaurant in New Haven.

making good pizza in New Haven, CT. My pizza order is usually pepperoni and meatball, but Ernie's also makes a great broccoli rabe and sausage pizza.

Chang: What are your thoughts on New Haven getting named the pizza capital?

Cumpstone: New Haven has a strong tradition of pizza (ah-beetz). This is not surprising given that many of New Haven's Italian immigrants came from the area of Naples and Amalfi.

I think that New Haven being named the pizza capital of the United States is very exciting and much deserved given that there are so many pizza greats in New Haven: Pepe's, Sally's, Modern, Ernie's, and dozens more. It is even more exciting for me and my wife's family because the announcement was made at Ernie's Pizzeria, which was started by my

wife's grandparents (see below):

Chang: How did Ernie's Pizza start and who was involved?

Cumpstone: Ernie's Pizzeria was started by Ernesto (Ernie) De Riso in 1971. Ernie migrated from Amalfi, Italy in the 1950s and worked primarily in restaurants, including other pizzerias in the New Haven area before opening his own. Ernie's celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021. Ernie's was started by Ernesto (Ernie)



Photo contributed by Patrick Cumpstone
Governor of Connecticut, Ned Lamont, and the owner of Ernie's Pizzeria, Pasqual De Riso, at the restaurant in New Haven.

and Jennie De Riso. Ernie's Pizzeria has been operated by Ernie's son Pasqual De Riso since the late 1980s.

I believe the building was originally constructed in 1900 and operated first as a flour/grain store, supporting many of the area's farmers and residents. Ernie is the only one of his siblings to have migrated to the United States. The rest of the family is very involved in the local economy of the Amalfi, Italy area, particularly in the food and hospitality business, including growing much of Amalfi's famous lemons at makes every single pizza that comes out of Ernie's. He has been the only pizza maker since the 1980s.

Chang: Looking to the future, how do you think the pizza culture will develop in New Haven?

Cumpstone: Pizza culture will continue to thrive in New Haven. The pizza industry in New Haven is truly a very close-knit community and has only grown closer in the

last few years.

On the day that New Haven was announced as the pizza capital of the United States, it was amazing to see all of the "pizza greats" under one roof. That has become increasingly common in recent years, as the owners of Pepe's, Sally's, Ernie's, Bar, Zeneli, etc, have had more frequent meet-ups, including hosting pizza-making classes and participating in conferences about New Haven pizza. It is truly a remarkable community with the same mission: to make great pizza.

Pizza has been ingrained in American culture. We cannot imagine a world without pizza, and luckily, New Haven has provided a center for everyone to gather and share their love for this delicious food.

We are so grateful to have this scrumptious center for all pizza-lovers!

Restaurant Review

Ernie's Pizzeria

A Welcoming Dining Experience

by Kylee McLain '24

For the past four months, it has been a Friday tradition for my family to order from Ernie's Pizzeria every time

my boyfriend comes over because of his request. However, for the first time, my boyfriend and I ate inside the little New Haven restaurant that sits on Whalley Ave.

Ernie's Pizzeria often gets overlooked because of the hype around Wooster St., which is often referred to as "the pizza capital of the country". However, Ernie's is New Haven's little gem regarding pizza.

On the outside and inside, Ernie's may appear to be a small, outdated restaurant, but what people don't realize is that their pizza certainly makes up for it. The interior walls are all built from wood and contain archways to divide booth seating from table seating. Its low-light lighting and positive atmosphere can give customers a welcoming dining experience. The walls include a few black-and-white photographs that show the restaurant's history, and mostly, not much has changed. The restaurant has worked hard to maintain its original outline and decor.

Whalley Avenue is a decently busy street in New Haven, especially because it is the street right

off of exit 59 of the Merritt Parkway. Because of its location, takeout at Ernie's can get a little busy, especially from 5 p.m. through 7 p.m., but most times, people dining in can find a table decently quickly. Ernie's Pizzeria is very casual, and diners can wear whatever they feel comfortable in.

From my experience, there were mainly families dining in for dinner, which created a lighthearted

atmosphere. Both customers and staff were laughing and enjoying their time.

My boyfriend and I sat at a booth, and our server timely greeted us. We both figured that we would end up getting our usual: a medium cheese pizza well done, but after reviewing the menu and looking at all the toppings, I added sausage to my half this time.

After about 20 minutes of waiting, the pizza was finally ready to be brought out, and the smell of freshly cooked pizza filled our noses and consumed our thoughts. The crust was golden brown, and the cheese looked to have been cooked to perfection, with a few spots of discoloration from the oven. My half contained sausage on both the outside and on the inside of the cheese, which I loved because it ensured a fresh piece of sausage with every bite.

Within my first few bites, it was evident that the staff had mastered the cheese-to-sauce ratio because, unlike some other places, there was not an overabundance of either. The sausage, sauce, and cheese all complimented each other so well, and my glass of Foxon Park cream soda washed my palate beautifully.

To switch things up, my boyfriend and I both gave each other a slice from our opposite halves, and both of us were pleasantly surprised. The cheese pizza was one of the best that I have ever had, and while I would still prefer the sausage, the cheese was filled with so much flavor that it made me easily want another slice.

Although my boyfriend and I went for a traditional pizza, Ernie's Pizzeria is a place for everyone to enjoy. They can serve gluten-free and whole wheat crust; they incorporate vegan options into their menu; and they can accommodate high chairs when they are needed.

My dining experience at Ernie's Pizzeria has persuaded me to make my usual Friday night takeout order from there and make it a dine-in tradition instead. Their excellent service, positive atmosphere, and palatable food truly set them apart from the rest.



Photo by Google Maps



Visit Ernie's Pizza at 279 Whalley Ave, New Haven

JSA Takes on Washington as Winter Congress Unveiled

by Scarlett Zhai '25

In the heart of Washington, D.C., Amity's chapter of Junior State of America (JSA) left its mark on the recent JSA Winter Congress, showcasing the power of student voices in shaping the future. The three-day legislative simulation brought together high school students from across the nation and transformed them into members of the United States Congress.

Amity's delegation played an active role in the immersive experience. Luke Chang '24 described the nature of Winter Congress, stating, "Winter Congress was a great experience for all of us. We met people from Chicago all the way to Southern California and conversed with all of them to expand our viewpoints in multiple topics."

The event went beyond legislation, as students engaged in debates on diverse topics, from the merits of abolishing the electoral college to the best Taylor



Photo contributed by Sophia Messina '25
JSA members by the Washington Monument

Swift album.

Angela He '24 highlighted the significance of Winter Congress in shaping the Amity chapter of JSA, saying, "Amity students were able to share their ideas in meaningful political debate, find a cause through activism, and hear new perspectives from hundreds of students across the U.S."

Not only does Winter Congress help students engage in debates, but it also helps students engage with each other. Sophia Messina '25 emphasized the unique ability of JSA to connect young minds from many schools across the country.

She recounted a special moment from the trip, saying, "On the D.C. trip, my friends and I met two students from California and formed an unforgettable bond with them."

Amity delegates who had attended Winter Congress in previous years had nothing but praise for it. Sabah Salahuddin '25 reflected on her Winter Congress experience, describing it as "amazing as always."

She described her great experience further, saying, "The debates and discussions were informative as well as entertaining, and my favorite part was our chapter dinner tradition at California Pizza Kitchen. For anyone wondering about whether they should join JSA or not, I definitely recommend it!"

For Kara Kim '26, the JSA experience was an opportunity for personal growth. "JSA is such a great place to get to know new people and gain confidence in speaking publicly. Going to Winter Con in D.C. was a great experience for me because not only did I meet new people but I learned responsibility."

Addie Ahmed '27 shared her initial nervousness and how it transformed into an amazing experience. "Wintercon was such an amazing experience."

Photo contributed by Aachal Gupta '25
Alex Klee '25 speaking at Winter Congress



Photo contributed by Aachal Gupta '25
Alex Klee '25 speaking at Winter Congress

I was initially nervous because I was one of the only freshmen, but everyone was so welcoming, and it was so fun exploring D.C. and meeting people from all around the U.S."

In addition to the serious legislative work, Winter Congress also offered a variety of activities including keynote speakers and the much-anticipated JSProm, creating lasting memories for every participant.

The 2024 JSA Winter Congress cultivated leadership, created lasting friendships, and encouraged young voices to be heard. For anyone considering joining JSA, take it from the 29 delegates from Amity—it's an unforgettable journey of self-discovery and community building.

Students Travel to Florida for International BBYO Convention

by Eve Marin '27

BBYO is a nonprofit Jewish youth movement with the goal of building the identity of Jewish teens through meaningful experiences. Just recently from February 15-18, many students from Amity who are a part of BBYO had the opportunity to attend a convention in Orlando, Florida.

Although BBYO has many local conventions, there are three main conventions Jewish teens have the opportunity to participate in throughout the year: a fall convention, a spring convention, and the international convention that takes place during wintertime. The Florida trip marked the international convention. At the convention, people from all over the world were present for three days.

Maddy Sussman '26, who is the Mit Mom of the SDA chapter, had the pleasure of attending the convention. Sussman reflects how "there were over 5,000 attendees and there were people from all over. I got to make many new friends from Italy, the Netherlands, Mexico, Israel, Argentina, Germany and more."

Despite the fact that the international convention happens only once a year, its annual occurrence makes an impact on many attendees. Jaron Dembsky '27 described the convention as

a "meaningful experience," as he "got to meet so many Jewish teens which was very eye opening.

Ross Lynch spoke, several congressmen were there and one of the women from Forbes top 100 influential women in tech was there."

In addition to being a great event for networking and interacting with a world-wide Jewish community, attendees also took part in many fun activities throughout the trip.

Sussman reported that the teens "got to watch Pitbull perform as well as Noa Tishby [an Israeli activist, actress, model, writer and producer]".

When asked to describe the impact of IC, local SDA chapter president Dana Pletter '24 said that "International convention is a very inspiring event for teens because they get to hear from so many successful speakers who used to be in the very same position

as all the teens there. It's inspiring to know that you have the ability to make a difference too."

Overall, the convention was a huge success that left many attendees feeling inspired as well as excited for next year's international convention.

If you want to become a member of an international teen-led Jewish organization and take part in the action in the future, make sure to join BBYO!



Photo contributed by Dana Pletter '24
Members of the SDA chapter at the convention

National Honor Society presents...

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Please consider donating to the school supply drive hosted by the Amity NHS! Make sure to follow @amitynhs on Instagram for more information.

New CTE Teacher Hopes to Inspire Students with a Love for the Culinary Arts

by Avery Ketchian '26

Do you enjoy creating delicious desserts and the decorating process?

years before she decided to close so that she could spend more time with her family. She took on the role of a culinary teacher at Amity soon afterward. Linkstrom is a fantastic addition to the Amity community and she brings an abundance of pastry background and knowledge to the school's CTE program.

The new culinary teacher at Amity, Chef Adrianna Linkstrom, is very passionate about baking.

When asked what initially sparked her interest in baking, Linkstrom said, "My earliest memory of falling in love with desserts was when I attended a library event at the age of seven that revolved around chocolates. The chef demonstrated how to make some basic chocolate candies at home and I fell in love with it. So much so that I had all my friends over for a chocolate making party where we wore chef hats and I even created a banner with a fake chocolate shop name."

This memory stuck with her throughout her childhood, yet she did not know at the time that her newfound hobby would later turn into a successful career.

In her senior year of high school, Linkstrom started decorating cookies, which helped her realize that baking was her true passion. Once she knew that the field of culinary arts was her path, she attended Johnson and Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island. Linkstrom graduated Summa Cum Laude with a bachelors of science in baking and pastry arts in 2014.

After graduating, she taught pastry at the Lincoln Culinary Institute in Shelton, Connecticut. Whilst teaching there, Linkstrom kept practicing and learning new skills, never forgetting her dream of owning a bakery one day.

After three years, she decided to turn her dream into reality. Linkstrom opened her own bakery in Milford, Connecticut called Good Morning Cupcake, which she fondly describes as "a boutique bake shop specializing in mini cupcakes, decorated sugar cookies and custom cakes."

Linkstrom operated a successful bakery for four

When asked about how her experience teaching at Amity has been so far, Linkstrom said, "I am so honored and lucky to be teaching the students at Amity about what I am passionate about. I hope to inspire students who might be interested in the culinary arts to follow their dreams."

Students greatly enjoy her class as well. Jacob Gurevich '26 comments how Lindstrom's "class is cool and the teacher is nice. She is funny and considerate."

When she is not teaching at Amity, Linkstrom enjoys spending her free time drawing, painting, sewing, and crocheting. Linkstrom's advice for anyone interested in going into the culinary arts field is to be committed, have passion, and always go after your aspirations.



Photo contributed by Adrianna Linkstrom



CALL US AT 203-387-3810



A Mess For One and All: Students and Staff Work toward a Cleaner Cafeteria Environment

by Alicia Castellanos '24

Students walk into the cafeteria during their lunch wave with a huge appetite, expecting to be greeted with their usual freshly wiped table. Instead, they see someone's leftovers and crumbs which are scattered

around the table. Amity's cafeteria conditions have progressively gotten worse throughout the years due to the fact that students aren't throwing away their garbage or cleaning up after themselves. It's an issue that not only affects the students but the overall high school staff.

Amity Regional High School looks to promote clean, safe, efficient cafeteria facilities and a pleasant atmosphere for students to eat in, Therefore, it is expected that students follow certain guidelines when in the cafeteria.

The student handbook states the following regarding these guidelines: "you and the other students at your tables are responsible for keeping the table and floor area clean.



Photo contributed by Amity administration

Lunch tables with leftover trash in the cafeteria on a recent school day.

This is the responsibility which goes with the privilege of eating in the cafeteria." Given the state of the cafeteria, it seems like a privilege which students are not appreciating and maintaining.

A statement under the section Cafeteria Cleanliness in the ARHS Community Happening Newsletter released on November 17, 2023, further mentions the cafeteria issue. "In the past few weeks, we have seen a sudden increase in the mess that some students are leaving at cafeteria tables during lunch and study halls, along with a decrease in students cleaning up after themselves.

We realize that most of our students are still doing what they should and keeping their areas clean for others to use, and we want to make sure that they all have a clean and healthy place to eat and work. We are working on changing the behavior of the few who are leaving messes behind, and we are asking for your help," the statement continues.

The email statement goes on to mention alternatives to improve the cafeteria cleanliness. A conversation regarding the issue between a parent and student was suggested in order to bring the situation to consideration. Through the statement, students are also encouraged to speak up with their peers if they are bothered by the messiness.

Furthermore, the statement goes on to mention if a parent thinks their child may be leaving a mess behind, then the parent should remind their child that their actions are unacceptable. It implies that the reminder would make a difference in assisting them in correcting their behavior and the issue overall.

This issue has not only been brought to attention through the administration but through students themselves. Soumya Wijesekera '25 said, "As of recently, my usual lunch table has crumbs all over it and it is so gross. We have to clean it up before even sitting down to eat."

Wijesekera recalled multiple incidents where she and her group of friends had to find a cleaner table since their usual table was unbearable to eat on. "I don't think I should have to clean someone else's trash and mess just to be able to eat my food every day," she said.

Students have also nurtured the cafeteria issue during "Afternoon With the Admins" meetings where Principal Andre Hauser and assistant principals Miguel Pickering and Frank Barretta are in attendance listening and considering any questions or concerns students have about the school. The cafeteria cleanliness has been a topic brought up for discussion in the past two "Afternoon with the Admins" meetings. Students hope to have their voices heard by bringing the issue to the administration and have some solutions to the ongoing situation.

Despite the situation affecting students, the custodial and kitchen staff have been also affected by the recent changes in the cafeteria conditions. "Before, the kitchen staff could wipe the cafeteria tables after the last lunch wave, but now they have to take everything off," said John Pellicani, the school's head custodian.

"We the custodial staff have to do the same thing just to help them out. It really slows our process down. Now there is more trash on the floor which is additional

Continued on page 12

Sold Out! Mean Girls Sets Ticket Selling Record

by Luna Lu '27

went live on the 1st of February. Just twenty days later, on the 21st, tickets for all five dates were cleared by the student body who had long-anticipated the tickets to go on sale.

Both cast and audience members were in awe of this astonishing feat that the community members had pulled off. Among those was Anna Edwards '26, who plays Cady Heron in the musical.

"It really felt surreal that we sold out this fast. It reminded me how special it is that I get to be a part of such an amazing production that so many people are excited to see," said Edwards.

Edwards joined the Mean Girls Production after performing in last year's *Beauty and the Beast* as part of the ensemble, and as Marie/Spoon. After having an incredible experience, Edwards has returned with a new spotlight in this year's Mean Girls musical with the lead role of Cady Heron.

Tickets for Amity's production of Mean Girls

"I've always had a love for performing, and ever since I saw my first Amity show I knew I wanted to be a part of Amity Creative Theater (ACT). Last year I had such an amazing time in the musical so I couldn't imagine not being a part of Mean Girls," said Edwards.

After almost two months of rehearsals, Edwards still remembers how she felt when she first received the role of Cady, crediting it as one of her fondest memories.

"That day was really my 'I can't believe I get to play Cady' kind of freaking out moment, and I just felt so giddy and incredible that I got the opportunity to play this character," reminisced Edwards.

Edwards attributed the Mean Girls tickets' selling out to the exceptional quality of ACT productions and the resulting audience interest.

"I think that the people who saw *Beauty and the Beast* last year had a great time and want to see what else we can do," she said. "Amity really does have such an incredible theater program with amazing directors, choreographers, and students who

work tirelessly to put on a great show. I think people know that ACT will always give them a run for their money."

Edwards also expressed her love for her castmates, saying that ACT wouldn't be where it is today without its members.

"Everyone is so hardworking, supportive, and kind. I don't think any of us would love this show as much as we do if we didn't all have each other's backs," she added.

Aside from the classic Mean Girls storyline, audience members can also look for ACT's own unique spin to the show.

"You can expect to see lots of fun musical numbers and a new personalized take on each and every character," said Edwards. "I can't wait to share my own version of Cady!"

Mean Girls opens about a month from now on April 5th and will run for five nights through April 13th.

Come to support ACT's incredible cast and crew – be there, it will be fetch!



Photo contributed by Lily Parady '24

The Cast of Mean Girls during rehearsals.

2024 MusicFest Will Have a "Festival" Vibe

by Luna Lu '27 and
Chloe Chang '27

The Amity Music Department's annual spring concert, or MusicFest, will be held on May 16th in the John J. Brady Center. It will feature performances from choir, band, jazz band, Rhythmix, as well as other acts, giving it a uniquely "festival vibe."

Students can expect a fun night of music and to be amazed at the influx of talent from Amity's Performing Arts students.

What is so special about MusicFest? Simply put, MusicFest is a chance for students to display full creative liberties over what they want to perform. To elaborate, unlike the traditional band and choir performances, MusicFest also includes solo or small group acts.

In previous years, there has been singing, piano, and jazz performances, making it something that everyone can enjoy.

MusicFest is a chance for the many different performing arts groups to all come together during one performance.

"It's great to see how well our pieces come together in the end," said violinist Riya Patel '27.

The Performing Arts here at Amity has repeatedly shown its high standards for performances given, and many musicians have stated their satisfaction with the performances that have occurred. They also expressed just how valuable of an experience it is.

"Amity Performing Arts is an

extremely positive, fun, and rewarding environment to be a part of. It is a program filled with many talented and supportive people," said choir member Juliana Pratley '26.

Additionally, not only does MusicFest showcase the students' incredible skill in their respective ensembles, it also serves as a chance for the students to network with like-minded peers who share their passion for music.

"My favorite part is the sense of community when it comes to the performances. I talked to people I never thought I'd become friends with, and everybody is so supportive and kind," said clarinetist Fynn Vouras '27.

Though the highly anticipated festival is still two months away, Amity students have already begun preparing for what audience members can expect to be an unforgettable night.

"My group has been doing a variety of songs for the show. Overall, I think we are doing a good job so far!" said choir member Bianca Lambiase '25.

"We will make it a great show for the whole school to see," she added.

MusicFest is the biggest performance of the school year and therefore there are very high expectations for each performing group, especially after their exceptional Music in Motion and Winter Concert performances earlier this year.

Set your calendars for May 16th and come to support Amity's gifted musicians! Stay tuned for more information.

An Introduction to the Indie Music Star Mitski and her 2024 Tour

by Avery Ketchian '26

If you enjoy listening to indie music, you may have heard of Mitski. Mitsuki Miyawaki is a young woman advancing in her career as an indie genre artist. She is not called Mitsuki on stage; her stage name is Mitski. The reason for that is that she wanted a stage name to honor her heritage and also to keep her personal life and career separate. Mitski's albums consist of indie-pop, indie-rock, and pop songs.

She uses singing and songwriting as a form of therapy. Mitski usually sings about falling in love, loneliness, and being insecure. She originally loved the idea of studying film in college, but soon realized music was her passion.

After she switched her degree in college, she moved to Purchase College's Conservatory of Music in New York. This music program helped change her music career for the better.

During college, she was songwriting, singing, and recording her first album called *Lush*, which was released in 2013.

Evelyn Wright '25 fell in love with Mitski's music four years ago. Wright was lucky enough to attend Mitski's concert on February 17, 2024, in Boston, Massachusetts.

"My favorite album is *Lush*, since she does such a fantastic job with channeling her artistic style

and her messages into each of those songs," Wright said.

"I really like the artist since I find that music like hers stays true and relatable, and not every song is the same. Each of them has such a unique message, and it's easy to find yourself falling in love with how unique each song is."

Mitski has been to Florida, North Carolina, Massachusetts, and many more states during her 2024 tour. Mitski's most popular song is "My Love Mine All Mine", which is well-known among many teenagers.

If you like indie music, check her out, and you might want to buy a ticket for her next tour!



Photo accessed from @Mitski on Instagram

Artist of the Month: Jessie Zheng '25

by Karishma Balamurugan '27



It's a brand new month, which means it's time to shine the spotlight on another incredibly talented artist at Amity.

This time, let's dive into the world of Jessie Zheng '25, a self-taught artist who effortlessly blends physical and digital mediums. Jessie Zheng's artistic journey has been nothing short of captivating! Her passion for art truly took flight in middle school and has been soaring ever since.

From graphic design to painting and sketching, Zheng openly explores various mediums; how-

ever, it is 3D CAD modeling where she finds the most joy and satisfaction.

With her impressive skills, she has taken on roles as a graphic designer and social media manager, which enables her to support clubs, organizations, and offers her the opportunities of internships.

Beyond that, she uses her expertise to shape UIX elements for websites, craft clever marketing strategies for social media, and create captivating logo designs. Through these opportunities and her experience, Zheng has developed a wide variety of styles.

Digitally she explores various aesthetics; her favorites being a blend of cutout images with a grungy scrapbook style, additionally finding the intricate details of semi-realism and still life the most satisfying to capture in her paintings.

Zheng also finds a love for miniature builds because the level of detail and intricacy in building architecture, mini objects, and overall designs inspires her to break the boundaries of her own limitations. This is the origin of her love for Legos! They are a way for her to bring her ideas to life in these tiny worlds.

Zheng said she gets her inspiration from art that is "weird, unimaginable, and extremely creative. We learn art's rules, so that we can break

them, and my favorite types of art embody this principle. The weird and strange, typically ostracized in the art world, often hold the most meaning."

Zheng continues her art journey with unwavering passion and dedication. As she doodles on math homework and paints on her iPad in her free time, Zheng continues to evolve as an artist, constantly seeking inspiration and finding new ways to express herself. Her artistic journey is far from over, and we can't wait to see where her boundless talent takes her next.



Photos contributed by Jessie Zheng '25
Some examples of Jessie Zheng's work.

"Love Is All Around" A Q&A Cabaret Recap

by Chloe Chang '27
and Grace Millard '27

In the Black Box on February 9th, Amity Creative Theater hosted a cabaret to highlight all of the incredibly talented high school students in the district! In this production, every participant chose their own song, with many abiding by the theme of love in honor of Valentine's Day. It was a dazzling night for everyone, full of touching renditions of classics, to exciting niche music for the audience to explore.

The Trident interviewed two performers, Victoria Pelton '27 and Kayleigh Fitzpatrick '24, for the first-hand scoop on what happened during the show!



Photo contributed by Lily Parady '24

Chang: What did you perform?

Fitzpatrick: I sang two songs. The first was "No Reason" from the musical Beetlejuice with Finn MacDaniel '26, and I also sang "Gimme Gimme" from Thoroughly Modern Millie.

Pelton: I performed "She Used to Be Mine" from Waitress.

Chang: How did you feel during the performance?

Fitzpatrick: Before I started singing I was a little nervous, but the second I started I was just having a good time. I love performing, so every chance I get to sing in front of others I always find it super enjoyable.

Pelton: Great! I loved seeing everyone sing and have fun on stage!

Chang: To someone who did not attend the

event, how would you explain what it was all about?

Fitzpatrick: I would just say that everyone gets together and sings their favorite songs. This cabaret had a Valentine's Day theme, so most people chose love songs they could sing. Parents and friends come, and it's a super low-stress chance to show off your talents.

Pelton: It's just a small event where anyone who wants to flaunt their singing abilities can do so. It's also just entertaining to watch since every song is really diverse and reflects the performer's personality.

Chang: Which of the performances stood out to you?
Fitzpatrick: To me, [senior] Daisy Kusnitz's performance stood out. The song suited her voice so well, and it was also a song I liked.

Pelton: I liked either the Peaches Act by Brayden Zhang '26 or the "Shaboom Shaboom" (a trio performed by Ian Rosenay '24, Finn MacDaniel '26, and Liam Van Tonder '26) and their song at the end.

Chang: What are your overall thoughts on this event?

Fitzpatrick: I think this was ACT's best cabaret yet. So many people participated, and everyone sounded great.

Pelton: It's an amazing experience where you can just sit back and enjoy the show, while also being in it!

As a whole, the show went tremendously well and everyone on stage and in the audience had a fantastic time, making great memories along the way!

Theater Three Presents "The Gifted Program"

The Theater Three Class performed their show "The Gifted Program" on Friday, February 23rd in the Black Box to a packed audience. Students have been working on this show since the beginning of the school year. By nature of the class, the show was entirely student-run. Jacob Ebert '24 directed, Lily Parady '24 was co-director, and all students in the class both acted and took part in some aspect of the production of the show.

In every aspect, "The Gifted Program" was a success for these students, and they look forward to putting on another show this semester.



Photos by Lily Parady '24

Top: Milki Ejara '26 in the opening scene
Bottom: (left to right) Ian Rosenay '24, Jacob Ebert '24, Levi Lopez-Perez '26, and Anthony Stankye '24 in a tense scene.

Spring Sports Season Begins

by Ziyang Zhang '27

As the warmth of spring fills the air, it signals not only the changing of seasons but also the dawn of a new chapter for sports enthusiasts at



Photo by Ziyang Zhang

A large turnout of parents, students, and coaches at Spring Sports Information Night.

Amity Regional High School. With anticipation, Athletic Director Ernie Goodwin described the upcoming sports season during the Spring Sports Information Night, sharing plans for the season.

Goodwin said, "At the core of Amity's sports philosophy lies a dedication to fierce yet fair competition. While victory is enticing, it is not the sole objective."

Rather, the emphasis is on nurturing growth and skill development, particularly for junior and freshman athletes aspiring to ascend to the varsity level," he added.

He emphasized the importance of team cohesion, acknowledging that each year brings a distinct dynamic necessitating establishing a robust team culture.

With a lineup boasting 11 sports, including baseball, softball, lacrosse, tennis, golf, volleyball, and outdoor track and field, the focus is on physical readiness and fostering camaraderie among teammates. Teams are encouraged to set individual and collective goals, with coaches assuming a pivotal role in guiding their teams towards success.

Notably, this season witnessed a change in the boys' volleyball coaching staff, with Gun-

nar Poulimas assuming the head coach role, injecting fresh perspective and vigor into the team.

Reflecting on the successes of the previous spring season, Goodwin reminisced about the many state tournaments entered, and the victories attained, such as the SCC Championship titles in softball. While the quest for championship glory exists, there is a pragmatic approach towards goal-setting, with an emphasis on crafting SMART goals that are ambitious yet attainable.

Madeline Bosma '24, a lacrosse player, said, "Some goals I have for this year are making states, going far in the SCC, and fostering teamwork from the season's inception."

She also mentioned some of the teams work during the off season saying, "We are participating in a winter league with teams from our conference while also engaging in strength training."

As athletic director, Goodwin oversees the operational aspects of the athletic department, ensuring seamless logistics and infrastructure support for all teams. He likened the department to a trunk, with each sports team branching out, symbolizing

the interconnectedness and collective strength of the Amity sports community.

Integral to Amity's sportsmanship and excellence ethos is the steadfast support of fans, who are expected to uphold the school's values on and off the field. It is a collective endeavor, with everyone—coaches, players, and fans—representing Amity with pride and integrity.

As the season unfolds, athletes like tennis player Riya Patel '27 commented on the spirit of commitment and perseverance, eager to contribute to their team's success.

With optimism and enthusiasm, the stage is set for another season of sports at Amity Regional High School.

Senior Nights Bittersweet for the Class of 2024

by Alyssa Xia '26

A tradition for seniors that include food, celebrations, and emotions, Senior Nights for winter sports were as memorable as they can be. Senior nights are typically organized by the underclassmen to appreciate and to send off their seniors. These nights can be filled with sad emotions when saying goodbye, but for the Girls Basketball Team and the Wrestling Team, the night was also full of joy.

On Thursday, February 1st, the wrestling team went against Branford, and won 46-29. Even with some varsity wrestlers out, everyone stepped up, pulling out a win. The team also held their senior night on this day.

Senior Sila Bayram '24 reflected, "My senior night was memorable and everyone wrestled incredibly hard ... and it was honestly awesome."

A few days later, on Tuesday, February 6th, Girls Basketball held their senior night, and showed their love, support and respect for their seniors. They played against Luralton Hall and came away with a 52-34 win. The girls worked very hard to get the win and make sure that their senior night was memorable.

Melanie Castillo Pacheco '24 said, "Hearing my name being called as one of the starting five will be a memory I will cherish forever."

She added, "There aren't enough words to describe how amazing the night was, which is why I am so grateful for the girls on the team for making it worthwhile."

The underclassmen put a lot of care and effort into the night, made clear by the attention to detail and the supportive decorations.

Senior nights are a farewell, but they are also a welcome into a new part of their life. They will draw new paths, and go to new places, but senior nights will always be a cherished

*Get Ready for Spring Sports!
Tryouts begin on
Saturday, March 16.*

Winter Postseason Recap: Spartans Boast Mixed Accolades

by Nicholas Lu '26

As the winter sports season comes to a close, it is a good time to take a look over the progress and success of Amity's winter sports teams.

Although none of Amity's winter sports teams have been able to win SCC titles this time around, it is quite impressive for nearly all of Amity's teams to be able to enter and progress through their respective state runs in the same season. With the majority of Amity's winter sports teams having finished their postseasons, here is a rundown of the results of each of Amity's teams' SCC and CIAC tournaments.

On Friday, March 1 at Bennett Rink, Amity's Boys Hockey team faced off against Chesire for the SCC Division II Championship title. This was the culmination of a very successful regular season for the Boys Hockey team which allowed them to go on such a deep conference run.

Unfortunately, Amity lost 1-7 against Chesire and were forced to accept being runners-up. However, on Tuesday, March 5th, the team played South Windsor in the 1st round of the CIAC Tournament and outscored them 5-1. The team will continue on in states, playing in the quarter finals coming up on Friday, March 8th.

Meanwhile, Girls Hockey team, as part of a Amity/Cheshire/North Haven co-op, also known as the Blades, reached the semifinals in their conference and the first round of states before losing. The team lost in the SCC 1-2 to the West Haven/SHA co-op and later lost 1-4 to the Southington/Avon co-op in the state tournament.

In the other tournament-based postseason, basketball has also seen some success. On February 22, Boys Basketball team played against Hillhouse High School in New Haven in the first round of the SCC tournament. After a difficult game, Amity lost 68-88. The team did make it to the state tournament however, and played Griswold, who was ranked 10, whereas Amity was ranked 23. On

Tuesday, March 5th, the team was able to pull out with a win and continued their state run on Thursday, March 7th against Maloney High School.

At the same time, Girls Basketball team saw some more success as well. They made it to the quarterfinals of SCC's before narrowly losing 57-59 against North Haven. They then moved on to play Wilby in the first round of the CIAC tournament, winning 60-39. Unfortunately, the team lost to Bristol Eastern in the second round with a score of 27-38.

As for Amity's non-tournament based postseasons, results were also quite varied. Amity's Cheerleading team finished 9th with 63.7 points on Feb 3, Amity's Wrestling Team achieved 5th place with 76 points on Feb 10, and Amity's Boys Swimming team achieved 4th place with 671.5 points on February 28th.

Meanwhile at the SCC Indoor Track Championship Meet, Amity's Boys Indoor Track team placed 4th with 40 points while Amity's Girls Indoor Track team placed 10th with 23.5 points.

Two of Amity's athletes, Micah Blair for the boys team and Liliana Quill for the girls team achieved first place in their events with a mark of 22 feet and 6 inches in the long jump and 9 feet and 6 inches in the pole vault respectively.

Across the board, this 2023-2024 winter season has been very successful for Amity. Even though none of the winter sports teams won their respective SCC titles, it is important to highlight the success of having so many teams able to get as far as they did into their postseasons.

Boys Swimming and Diving is still in the midst of their championship season with trials for Class L on Saturday. Freshman Julian Virgil enjoyed being part of the team. "As a freshman, I couldn't have asked for a better team. We were all supportive of each other, and we all had fun," he said.

Now that the winter sports season is fast approaching its conclusion, Amity's athletes will now prepare for the start of the spring season which is certain to herald even more success for them and their teams.

Athlete Spotlight

Avery Palmucci '23: Journeying from Spartan to Bobcat as a Three Season Athlete

by Elizabeth Grant '25



Photo by Cameron Boon

Though she's only a first-year, Amity alum Avery Palmucci '23 has made outstanding improvements in her college running career thus far. When first joining the division one Quinnipiac Bobcats' Cross Country

Team, Palmucci had already enjoyed a successful position running cross country and track all four years of high school.

The young athlete qualified to run at the highest level in the state in fall of her senior high-school year and medaled at SCCs on her 4x800 team and in the 3200 m.

Shifting to training in college required some adaptation on Palmucci's part.

She notes, "The adjustment of being one of the top girls on the team to having a lot of girls better than you who push you is both humbling and rewarding."

Palmucci found that in addition to the intensity of the training, the team was also competing at a higher level than her previous experiences in high school. Though it was something to get accustomed to, this track and cross country star uses it to push herself and stay motivated.

Palmucci says, "I get to be a part of an amazing team of women who work so hard and inspire me every day."

Motivation is key in a sport as grueling as cross country or track. When discovering how to take her fitness to the next level, Palmucci found herself running twice as much mileage as in high school and working with lift coaches to build strength throughout the season. These days, she is running about forty miles every week, racing distances ranging from a

mile to 5k.

Palmucci regards her team as the most precious aspect of college running thus far, and especially values the group of women she has met along the way.

"Going into college was such a new, nerve-racking experience for me," she said. "Since I have a team of people supporting me, it made transitioning from high school into college much easier."

Her coaches and teammates are like a family and she gets to contribute to that dynamic as well.

As a nursing major, juggling her time between athletics and academics is a tricky balance. However, she says, "It prepares me for the real world, teaching me discipline and time management."

College athletes run busy lives but Palmucci feels fulfilled and proud to be part of the Bobcats. This fall, the team claimed their second MAAC Cross Country Championship title which was a major success for Quinnipiac. To experience the win as a first-year was inspiring for Palmucci and an early taste of victory for the next level of her team.

As Avery Palmucci wraps up her indoor track season and looks ahead to the upcoming outdoor season, she continues to train with her team, getting stronger and faster every day. What started as a hobby when she was 14 years old has turned into one of the most important parts of this Amity alum's life and identity.

Ski Team Wraps Up Short Season on the Slopes

by Sarinah Zamir '27

One of Amity's many winter sports teams, the Amity Ski Team, has just finished up a successful season

filled with personal records, fun memories, and new and returning shining talent.

The Amity Ski Team is led by four captains, Sarah Fortin '24, Gregory Hofstatter '24, Gianna Manuele '24, and Bowen Tullo '24.

Along with their coaches, Bruce German and Geoff Millenson, the captains pilot their team to success on the mountain by beginning with a month of dry-land training, and then transitioning to skiing practices at Mount Southington. There the team focuses on improving their form and speed while racing through gates.

Practices take place every Tuesday and Thursday, and the season has a total of 5 meets throughout the January and February. These meets culminate with the States meet, which took place on Thursday, February 29th and saw some of the skier's best performances.

The Ski Team is considered by many to be a fun experience for anyone who enjoys skiing and likes being part of a group who feel the same way.

Team Captain Sarah Fortin '24 loves being on the team and said, "I feel like I can be myself with my friends on the Ski Team, and I am able to get exercise while doing something I really love."

When asked about her feelings regarding the States meet, Fortin remarked, "I'm really excited to participate in it, but it is also a little bittersweet since it is my senior year."

She went on to express her excitement about the team spirit at states, mentioning how "everyone, even those who did not make it to states, are allowed to come and cheer ... It brings a sense of camaraderie to our team."

The end of the season this year was especially exciting for the Girls team and the Freshman on it, many of whom went to states and had great races.

This year's season was distinct to team captain Bowen Tullo because of its camaraderie as well. He noted, "In the past, we didn't have a real sense of being a 'team', but now it feels like we all really support each other and get along."

This raises a question of where team unity comes from, since skiing is an individual sport where teammates compete against each other and the clock.



Photo accessed from Instagram @amity.ski.team

The Ski Team during a meet in February.

Tullo shared how teamwork is extremely important when it comes to preparing for races, saying, "We discuss racing strategies and hype up our teammates to boost their confidence."

"Despite the barriers to us working together on the hill," Tullo said, "we find a way to ensure that everyone is excited to be a part of the crew."

This excitement was especially fueled by new racers, including freshman Jenell Sauer who went to States. After her first states meet she remarked, "I had lots of fun and enjoyed every moment, from cheering on my companions to finishing off the race with food."

Despite the warmer than usual weather, the Ski Team had a fantastic end to their season with impressive performances by the athletes. They are looking forward to next year's season and celebrating this year's great one.



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Academic Decathlon Excels at Annual State Competition

by Luna Lu '27 and Chloe Chang '27

The Amity Academic Decathlon team visited New Fairfield High School in New Fairfield for the annual Connecticut state

competition on February 24th. The team was assessed on a multitude of topics ranging from economics to music. Select students also had a chance to compete in the interview and speech categories.

Student testing cumulated for a total of four hours and 15 minutes, plus more for miscellaneous assessments. The tests lasted for 30 minutes each with a separation of two minutes in between. The seven tests were given consecutively, starting off with math, music, economics, science, literature, art, and ending with social science.

The team had begun preparation two weeks prior in science teacher Alison Nork's classroom, where they completed their essays prior to the start of the state competition. Members also prepared individually to ensure optimal performance on competition day.

"I prepared by reading the book *The Lathe of Heaven* [the book accessed for this year's literature category], and going over the study guide one of my teammates made. I actually really enjoyed the book, and there was a lot to study for," Elena Huber '27 said.

Huber went on to win gold in the Literature category.

As a result of the team's ability to persevere through the oftentimes arduous study materials, all students were able to win in different categories.

Armaan Shrivastav '27, who won silver for both the science and essay tests, and bronze for both math and social science, was astounded after finding out about how well he placed.

"I felt both shocked and happy after winning in my categories. I was surprised by some wins and excited to receive others for the subjects I studied hardest for," said Armaan Shrivastav.

When the students felt the time crunch, they decided to focus on one topic that they found interesting and try to do well in it. Academic decathlon allows students to express individuality since it is more productive to study one specific subject and do well in it, as compared to studying the general overviews of all seven topics.

After the main testing ended, the team competed in a thrilling Super Quiz round, in which three members selected from each division were tasked with answering challenging questions concerning all seven subjects. In a tight face off with New Fairfield's team, Amity was able to pull off the Super Quiz win.

Aryan Shrivastav '27, gold winner in various categories such as math, social science, and economics, states that he "felt that the Super Quiz was intense, and fun to watch."

Decathletes agreed that the competition was an educational experience that helped them gain insight into what they needed to work on academically. Many team members also shared that they wish to continue competing next year due to their positive experiences this time.

States wrapped up with an awards ceremony, a chance for the student's hard work to pay off. All decathletes received awards, and many placed in categories that they put a lot of effort into studying for. The team placed second at States and will be attending the online national competition in April.



Photo contributed by Alison Nork
The Academic Decathlon Team at their State Competition in February.

Science Research Students Become Even More "Intelligent" about Artificial Intelligence

by Janet Fan '26

This past month, students in Amity's Science Research Program received a lesson on AI in the classroom presented by Amity's media specialists, Victoria Hulse and Ken Clark.

Tony Zhang '26 expressed surprise, saying, "AI is able to generate something new each time, even if the same prompt is used."

During this lesson, Hulse and Clark also showed students examples of AI generated art and audio.

"I think it's cool how AI can generate literally anything you can think of, like songs and images. Also, we learned about how quickly this technology is progressing- some people are even trying to find ways to implant AI into the human brain," said Nate Luciano '26.

The purpose of this lesson was, firstly, to help students understand what generative AI is and how it is different from other forms of artificial intelligence.

Secondly, the lesson sought to teach students how they can use generative AI tools to aid in their writing and research in an ethical manner.

"I thought that it was very interesting to learn about something that is quickly evolving around the world and the many uses for it. It was especially interesting to learn the many possible uses of AI for educational purposes," said Aditi Sidhartha '26.

The lesson started off with an introduction into a brief history of AI and the scientific developments that have led up to the creation of generative AI, such as Chat GPT or Google Gemini. Students learned that AI, or technology that seeks to imitate human behaviors such as learning or speech, have been around for much longer than most might expect.

For example, in 1997, the Deep Blue Chess Program was an AI that was able to outsmart the then world chess champion Garry Kasparov.

The reason why recent developments, such as Open AI's ChatGPT, are so groundbreaking is because of its ability to generate media based on a database of training data. Instead of being pre-programmed to respond to each unique prompt, generative AI is able to generate a new response to a prompt each time by analyzing vast amounts of data and calculating the probability of certain responses appearing.

ChatGPT



A central part of the conversation about how powerful AI is was the discussion with students about how to use this tool responsibly, especially in an academic setting. It was stressed to students that they should only use generative AI if their teacher approves it beforehand.

Additionally, because of the tendency of generative AI to "hallucinate," or generate false information, students learned that it is important for students to not rely on AI to complete all their tasks in their entirety. Students were taught the acronym, EVERY, to remind them to evaluate responses, verify facts and information, edit, revise, and take

responsibility for the information they generate using AI.

And, of course, students were reminded that, like every source, AI must be cited properly.

All in all, the presentation was an important lesson for many students as they navigate a new academic environment with the presence of generative AI. Learning how to use it as a tool is a valuable asset as the world becomes more reliant on this type of technology.

Students and Staff Work toward a Cleaner Cafeteria

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work to clean up." Pellicani feels that the recent increase in messiness in the cafeteria not only has him working rigorously but the kitchen staff as well.

Looking forward, the Amity administration hope to instill some conditions to further improve cafeteria cleanliness in the coming months. "We would like to suggest that the teachers who supervise during lunch waves bring around the trash bins to every table if possible," said Barretta,

"In recent discussions and meetings, the idea of a sanitary station in the

cafeteria was mentioned. It would allow students the opportunity to clean up after themselves after an accident or a spillage or a mess in general," he added.

Pellicani believes that when the administration and staff are working together, the conditions seem to be more accommodating to everyone. With assistance from students, the administration and custodial team look to have a decrease in the messiness and an increase in students cleaning up after themselves.

An overall cleaner environment within the cafeteria would not only benefit students themselves but the whole Amity community.