



September 2021



VOLUME LV

# Sword & Shield

JAMES MADISON MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT NEWSPAPER



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**Welcome back Spartans!** After a tumultuous year and a half, we are looking forward to being back in-person with you. From learning with peers to community building through clubs and school events, we are excited to cover the events of Memorial and beyond with you rather than at home. The September issue helps to get you up-to-date on how to navigate in-person school, recent news, and issues our student body cares about.



**Sword & Shield  
Editor Team**

Interested to join the Sword & Shield as a writer, photographer, or more? We meet Mondays at lunch in the photolab (room 521). Hope to see you there!

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# STUDENT LIFE

## A GUIDE TO USING YOUR RESOURCES

By: Amy Qiao

Memorial has so many resources; it's hard to keep track of them all. Luckily, Sword & Shield is here to guide you through all of it, so you can make the most out of the school year! We've organized a list of resources you can always count on, and divided them into an in-school and an online section, so you can easily find what you need!

### In-school resources:

**Your teachers-** We see our teachers so often, we forget that they're a great resource to ask questions or get advice. Whether you have questions about how to join clubs, studying tips, or fun books to read, your teachers are here to help!

**The Library-** Our library has so many resources, there could be an entirely separate article for it! Many people don't know that our school library is connected to the Madison Public Library system, so you can access so many resources in our very own library. The library is a really useful place, so get familiar with it and our online library portal when you can!

**Student Services-** Student Services can help students with not only school, but finding a job, volunteering opportunities, and so much more! If you ever need help with something, check out Student Services!  
**Tutoring-** Memorial offers so many different classes, and some of them are pretty hard. Fortunately, Memorial also has a great tutoring program where students help other students with many different subjects. Plus, if you're looking to volunteer, you can become a tutor and help other students!

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if you're looking to volunteer, you can become a tutor and help other students!

### Online resources:

**The Library Portal-** Not only does our library have a ton of in-person resources, but there are also so many resources on our library's website (also referred to as the "Library Portal"). Whether you're researching for a project or looking for some book recommendations, the Library Portal has great resources for you to use!

**The New York Times-** Thanks to our amazing librarian Ms. DeLorme, every student at Memorial has unlimited access to the New York Times! Besides being a great resource for keeping up with the news, the New York Times can also help with finding additional information for assignments!

## STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEMS

By: Olivia Zhu

If you ever feel lost, overwhelmed, or just want someone to talk to, the Memorial staff is here to support you! Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help--whether it's about family or friend issues, or looking for financial or mental health support, the Memorial staff will help you the best they can (NOTE: You can ask ANY STAFF MEMBER for help--they will direct you to the people that will most suit your needs). Below is a directory of services and support that Memorial provides for students.

### Psychologists

Memorial's psychologists are willing to lend an ear and will provide mental health support, such as resources and solutions for depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues.

Ms. Anderson (Wolf and Wisconsin neighborhoods)

- Office: 708
- Phone: 663-6053
- Email: mlanderson@madison.k12.wi.us

Ms. Conway (Fox and Rock neighborhoods)

- Office: 707K
- Phone: 663-6066
- Email: dhconway@madison.k12.wi.us

### **Social Workers**

Memorial's social workers will help you with any educational or social resources that you need--these include economic, scholarship, or employment information.

Ms. Shimanovsky (Wolf and Wisconsin neighborhoods)

- Office: 707D
- Phone: 442-2995
- Email: ljshimanovsk@madison.k12.wi.us

Ms. Menges (Fox and Rock neighborhoods)

- Office: 707A
- Phone: 663-6052
- Email: tamenges@madison.k12.wi.us

Ms. Barrientos (ELL social worker for all students)

- Office: 707J
- Phone: 663-6051
- Email: rbarrientos@madison.k12.wi.us

### **Multicultural Student Services Coordinator**

The Multicultural Student Coordinator offers information about programs and services that support minority students who identify as, but are not limited to, BIPOC, Latinx, and Oceania/Pacific Islander.

Ms. Jones

- Office: 707
- Phone: 663-6168
- Email: apjones@madison.k12.wi.us

Mr. Vang

- Phone: 663-6062
- Email: yvang2@madison.k12.wi.us

### **Nurses**

If you have any physical ailments or minor injuries, Memorial's nurses will provide solutions to problems such as headaches, nausea, and small cuts.

Ms. Dietrich

- Office: 621
- Phone: 663-6071
- Email: mddietrich@madison.k12.wi.us

Ms. Forbes

- Office: 621
- Phone: 442-2241
- Email: gforbes@madison.k12.wi.us

Ms. Rude

- Office: 621
- Phone: 663-6072
- Email: jrrude@madison.k12.wi.us

## **ENTRANCES & THEIR RULES**

*By: Olivia Zhu*

Knowing about all of the entrances and their "rules" at Memorial can be useful, especially if you're arriving at school late or re-entering the building after eating out for lunch. There are three main entrances used.

### **The Welcome Center (main entrance)**

The Welcome Center is the main entrance located in the parking lot. Students arriving by car often use this entrance. Go to the Welcome Center if you're arriving late-- it's the only entrance that will be unlocked for students. The staff will also check you in using your school ID.

### **The entrance on Gammon Road**

Students arriving by bus often use this entrance. This, like many other doors, will be locked after 8:15--so go to the Welcome Center if you're running late.

### **The entrance across Jefferson Middle School**

This entrance is tucked away in the smaller parking lot-- it too will be locked in the afternoon.





## SPARTAN YOUTH SERVICE (SYS)

By: *Laura McLees*

Spartan Youth Service (SYS) is Memorial's largest student-run volunteering club that focuses on providing students with opportunities to volunteer in the Madison community while learning about the value of service and gaining service hours. SYS volunteer events include taking care of cats at Underdog Pet Rescue, cleaning local parks and trails, helping out at the elementary school fun fairs, and aiding numerous local non-profits. We also organize the annual SPIRIT Day and Penny Wars. You can join SYS at any point during the school year, and sign up for any and all of the events we offer, making SYS an excellent option for student athletes and those with other commitments.

Have any questions/want more information? Contact the Co-Presidents ([lkmclees13@gmail.com](mailto:lkmclees13@gmail.com), [ashmingsingh7@gmail.com](mailto:ashmingsingh7@gmail.com)). Follow us on Instagram ([@jmm.sys](https://www.instagram.com/jmm.sys)) and Facebook (JMM Spartan Youth Service), and join our Google Classroom (code: 2qw4ttr) for updates! Can't wait to see you at our next meeting!

## GENDER EQUITY ASSOCIATION (GEA)

By: *Amira Pierotti*

Enjoy learning about women's, trans / gender-expansive, intersex, and LGBTQ+ rights? Want to organize with other youth activists? Believe feminism should fight misogyny, transphobia, and interphobia? Join the Gender Equity Association!

In the past two years, we have hosted a state-wide rally promoting menstrual equity, organized a rally for the Day of Silence in MMSD, presented at various youth advocacy conferences, altered MMSD health education curriculum, raised money for menstrual products, hosted a clothing drive to promote sustainable fashion, provided resources for domestic abuse victims, and received a \$1,500 grant for our work.

A fun and friendly community, GEA is an incredible place to make friends and make impactful, positive change! Join us starting Thursday, September 9th for meetings every Tuesday and Thursday at lunch! (Room will be announced on our Instagram.)  
Email: [genderequityassociation@gmail.com](mailto:genderequityassociation@gmail.com)  
Instagram: [jmmgenderequityassociation](https://www.instagram.com/jmmgenderequityassociation)



## MEDICINE, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR LOW INCOME FAMILIES EVERYWHERE (MEDLIFE)

By: *Sophia Jiang*

Are you interested in volunteering both locally and abroad? Or perhaps you hope to learn more about health disparities in developing countries? MEDLIFE stands for Medicine, Education, and Development for Low Income Families Everywhere, and it is a national organization that works with communities overseas to provide life-saving treatment and improve infrastructure. We have fun service opportunities such as fundraisers to help feed families in South America/Africa, food drives for the local community, 5K walks to raise money for sanitation projects, and a Service Learning Trip where you get to volunteer on site in countries like Peru, Ecuador, and Tanzania! We also host MEDTALKS, which are Q&A sessions with medical professionals. Finally, members are also awarded volunteer hours, gift cards, points, and other fun awards! To learn more, you can email us at [jmmmedlife@gmail.com](mailto:jmmmedlife@gmail.com), contact our staff advisor, or speak to our student president! See you soon!

Staff Advisor: Greg Mawer, [ggmawer@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:ggmawer@madison.k12.wi.us)

Student President: [arkrishna@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:arkrishna@madison.k12.wi.us)

Instagram: [@jmm\\_medlife](https://www.instagram.com/jmm_medlife)

## HEALTH OCCUPATIONAL STUDENTS OF AMERICA (HOSA)

*By: Ananya Krishna*

HOSA or Health Occupational Students of America is an international career, technical student organization that works to cultivate an environment for students to learn and interact with healthcare. JMM HOSA gives students the opportunity to compete in health related events at the regional, state, and international levels; serve in school, state, or national leadership positions; develop a broader understanding of many facets of health, hear from real world professionals, attend workshops, and participate in several service activities. Our chapter has had students place at Internationals, has hosted Blood Drives, organized bake sales, and conducted various guest lectures.

Advisor: [accostello@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:accostello@madison.k12.wi.us)

President: [arkrishna@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:arkrishna@madison.k12.wi.us)

Instagram @jmm.hosa

## FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA (FBLA)

*By: Ananya Krishna*

FBLA or Future Business Leaders of America is a national career, technical student organization that works to cultivate an environment for students to learn and interact with business. JMM FBLA gives students the opportunity to compete in business related events at the regional, state, and national levels; serve in school, state, or national leadership positions; develop a strong business sense, hear from real world professionals, attend workshops, and participate in several service activities. Our chapter has had students place at nationals, has volunteered at Second Harvest, fundraised for March of Dimes, and JMM will be hosting our 2022 Regional Leadership Conference!

Advisor: [spieper@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:spieper@madison.k12.wi.us)

President: [arkrishna@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:arkrishna@madison.k12.wi.us)

Follow us on Instagram @jmmfbla

## DRAMA, DEBATE, AND FORENSICS (DDAF)

*By: DDAF Leadership*

Do you love performing on stage? Or giving speeches and doing debates? Or maybe you're more into costume or set design? If any of these sound like you, Drama, Debate and Forensics is your club! As a club, DDAF strives to bring joy to the Memorial community through various aspects of the fine arts. Every year DDAF puts on two plays and one musical, which we invite actors, singers, dancers, and crew members to be a part of. We also have yearly forensics and debate competition seasons. All of our activities are for anyone, regardless of whether you have 10 years of experience or none, so everyone is welcome to come join. For more information contact our advisor Tim Scheffler ([tscheffler@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:tscheffler@madison.k12.wi.us)), or to speak to a student, follow and message us on Instagram @jmmemorialddaf. Make sure to join our Google Classroom with the code, and check for updates on DDAF activities as the year starts up. We look forward to seeing you at a meeting soon!

## RESULTS OF 2021 STATE TRACK & FIELD CHAMPIONSHIPS

*By: Sophia Jiang*

Last June, 25 Spartans competed in the WIAA State Track & Field Meet. Every single one worked incredibly hard to make it to the biggest stage of the season, battling through the complications of COVID-19.

Boys:

Cam Ketarkus, Dylan Anthony, Antonio Thomas, Anthony Ward, Chen Fong, Gates Lyons, Nicholas Adler, Ethan Ferry, Cole Hendrickson, Jake Zarov, AJ Ketarkus, Cole Wichmann, Bobby Rafferty, Jack Gammie, and Jairus Patterson

Girls:

Natalie Rhodes, Ana Ashworth (5th place, 100 M hurdles), Nevaeh Harden, Adeja Shannon, Brynn Fuller, Jenai Miller, Sarah Hershberger, Kiara Bissen, Audrey Braun, and Charlotte Sweet (2nd place, Pole Vault)

# SPARTAN ATHLETES ANSWER: “NOW THAT SPORTS ARE IN-PERSON, WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO IN YOUR FALL SPORT?”

*By: Sophia Jiang*

Lahyla Albrecht (Volleyball)

Now that sports are back in-person, what I am most looking forward to in volleyball is being able to interact and meet new people. I am also looking forward to learning new skills and playing as a team.

Sydney Dai (Poms)

I am most looking forward to bonding with my team and performances/competitions!

Mika Kern (Volleyball)

I am most looking forward to building new relationships, whether they are with my teammates and/or coaches. In my opinion you build a different type of bond with someone when it is through a sport, especially a team sport like volleyball, so I am definitely very excited for that.

Sophia Jiang (Tennis)

I am looking forward to cheering on my teammates during matches and getting to know my team better. Since this will be my first full tennis season, I am extremely excited to experience what a normal fall season looks like.

Anonymous (Cross country)

The thing I am most looking forward to in cross country is getting to know the team better, as well as getting to participate in larger meets.

Sonia Lucey, (Synchro outside of school)

I'm looking forward to having the so-called “normal” experience again in sports. Being able to go to competitions with my friends on the bus was one thing I really missed last year. I'm also excited to be able to see my friends from other teams across the nation at competitions.



## MMSD ON VIRTUAL SCHOOLING

*By: Sophia Jiang*

There is no doubt that COVID-19 has changed our lives. After a full year of virtual schooling, students have become accustomed to online learning. Even though the pandemic has largely made a negative impact, some students found that they work better in a virtual environment. This is why MMSD has established a program called the MMSD Promise, where students can now take academic courses online. The program is meant for all students in grade 6-12 who prefer to continue their education in a virtual setting.

The program is not a continuation of last year's pandemic learning, but rather an initiative meant to incorporate strong student engagement, teacher involvement, and flexibility. In order to sign up for this virtual option, students were required to submit their answers to three application questions regarding their preference to virtual school.

In order to help students' social-emotional learning, Executive Director of Library and Technical Services stated that they hope to expand the virtual programming in the coming years by adding K-5 options in fall 2023 or 2024. Dr. TJ McCray states that MPA students are to take online core classes but return to in-person learning for electives such as music and drama classes. Additionally, MMSD board members included in their presentation that they hope to expand the virtual programming in the coming years by adding K-5 options in fall 2023 or 2024.

Dr. TJ McCray states that, “The beauty of online learning is that it puts the learning in the hands of our students in ways we might not be able to do in a traditional classroom setting. Through online learning, we are able to engage students based on their needs and learning styles. We have to design a program that will be like none other in Wisconsin and

# NAVIGATING MEMORIAL: YOUR GUIDE TO GETTING AROUND THE BUILDING

By: *Amira Pierotti*

Whether it is your first time in Memorial or the thousandth, getting to class on time can be a hassle. From finding the right classroom in the maze of halls to walking through the seemingly endless sea of students, sitting down before the bell can be more difficult than it seems. Here are a few tips to help you navigate Memorial!

## 1. Find your classes on the map

Your planner contains an incredibly helpful map to guide you around the building. You can highlight or mark your classrooms before the first day. If you are unsure of how to get between classes, draw a path! This can help ensure you get to class on time instead of wandering around the halls.

## 2. Stay on the right side of the hallway

Many students walk on the wrong side of the halls, slowing down traffic. Staying on the right side of the halls helps everyone get to class on time. Every student walks at different speeds, which makes the halls chaotic enough. Obeying the traffic patterns will make the walk to class much easier for the whole school.

## 3. If able, don't walk slower than the crowd

Some students will walk much slower than the pace of the crowd. This makes it more difficult for everyone else to walk by. If you are able, walk at the same speed as those around you. If not, stay to the right side of the halls, making it easier for others to pass you.

## 4. Lost? Find a place to stop on the side, not the middle, of the halls

Do not stop in the middle of the halls! If you need to figure out where to go or to look at a map, find a place out of the way to stop. For instance, stop by a bench by the stairs. As the halls are bigger in those areas, you will have less of a chance of blocking traffic.

# JMM ANNUAL EVENT GUIDE

By: *Olivia Zhu*

Memorial has many annual school events that you should definitely participate in! Here are three major celebrations:

## Homecoming Week

Homecoming Week usually happens in September or October. It's a time when we welcome freshmen and returning students and celebrate school pride! Memorial holds a pep rally where freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors compete against each other; past competitions included tug-of-war, relay races, and lip sync battles. In addition, each weekday is usually designated with a clothing theme; past themes include Monochromatic Monday, Twin Tuesday, Wear Your Best Wednesday, and Throwback Thursday.

## Mid-Winter Dance

As the first dance of the school year, the Mid-Winter Dance is a great opportunity to make early-year memories! Every January, the school dons winter-themed decorations to prepare for this special event. Whether you plan on dancing or not, it's a great time to connect with the school, meet new people, and hang out with friends!

## Prom

While prom is often associated with the act of asking someone out to a dance, it's much more than that; in fact, who says you can't go alone or group up with friends? This is one school event that you don't want to miss--the convivial atmosphere, concessions, and music will make you stay up all night long.





# HOW TO BALANCE TIME DURING IN-PERSON SCHOOL

By: *Olivia Zhu*

Time management probably looked different for many of us last year (and for some, it might not have existed!). With a whole year accustomed to 4 hours of school along with asynchronous Wednesdays, it may seem impossible to get back in the hurried rhythm of regular school. I think it's safe to say that this year will be busier than last year, since in-person activities will be happening and teachers will assign regular homework. So, how can you balance your time? Here are three great tips to balance your time with in-person school.

## 1. Prioritize your to-do list

You might have many responsibilities outside of classes and homework--maybe you have a time-consuming extracurricular, a part-time job, or have family obligations. It may seem impossible to do everything with a 7-hour school day. To manage your time, start by writing a to-do list. Then reorder each task by priority--Which tasks contribute to the goals that are most important to you? Which tasks are needed most by others? Which assignments are due this week, and which are due next week? Consider these questions as you organize each task. The main idea is that more time is allocated for the most important tasks--the ones that you don't finish can be done quickly first the next day.

## 2. Time yourself for each task

How much time do you spend on English homework? Math? How long is the bus ride home? If you time yourself for each task you do, you can spot tasks that take a surprisingly long time and that could be done quicker. For example, pretend that it takes you two hours to do French homework. Was it because you were getting distracted? Was the material confusing? Once you've identified why you spend prolonged time on a task, try to shorten the time. If you were getting distracted by your phone, put it in another room. If you struggled through the homework itself, ask a friend or teacher for help. Little by little, if you reduce the time you spend on French by half, that extra one hour can be used for something else--such as studying for a quiz.

## 3. Make room for and monitor breaks

When working on a certain task, it's helpful to take breaks in between to prevent burnout. Some sources recommend taking a break every 30 minutes, one hour, or until the task is done. I think it's best to find the work increments that suit you. Then, choose how long your breaks are--5-10 minutes is an appropriate range--and most importantly, how to spend that time. Will you feel more refreshed if you take a quick walk, or if you ate a snack? Aim to choose an activity that is rejuvenating but not distracting. For example, if you think you'll be scrolling through Instagram even after your 5-minute timer goes off, consider a different way to fill up your breaks. Make sure to stick with the allotted time you set for yourself to stay on track.





### Vaccination Rates

By: *Anvika Annyapu*

#### Dane County, WI Vaccination Rates

Population - 546,479  
Partially Vaccinated - 68.3%  
Full Vaccinated - 71.4%

#### US Vaccination Rates

Population - 331 million  
Partially Vaccinated - 60.1%  
Full Vaccinated - 51.1%

#### Global Vaccination Rates

Population - 7.8 billion  
Partially Vaccinated - 31.8%  
Full Vaccinated - 23.9%

### Critical Race Theory Under Legislative Attack, Drawing Anger and Concerns for Education

By: *Amira Pierotti*

Over the past year, state legislatures have introduced and passed bills that would prevent K-12 schools from teaching about white supremacy and other systems of oppression. Critics have generalized such education as Critical Race Theory, “a legal theory and practice that recognizes systemic racism is deeply ingrained in American society and examines how our systems promote inequality,” according to the American Civil Liberties Union. They express concern that such education will make youth feel guilt over systemic oppression while proponents note that erasing marginalization creates a culture of silence.

As of August, eight states have banned CRT, re-

stricting what teachers can say about race, sex, politics, religion, and other “anti-American” topics. Former President Trump called CRT “divisive, anti-American propaganda” and a “Marxist doctrine holding that America is a wicked and racist nation, that even young children are complicit in oppression.” Many communities have organized widespread support for such bans on the local, state, and national levels.

However, the ACLU shares a rebuttal that “lawmakers seek to silence individuals, educators, and young people and impose an alternate version of American

history — one that erases the legacy of discrimination and lived experiences of Black and Brown people, women and girls, and LGBTQ+ individuals. Our country needs to acknowledge its history of systemic racism and reckon with present day impacts of racial discrimination — this

includes being able to teach and talk about these concepts in our schools.”

The debate does not seem to be ending soon with neither side changing their position. While a CRT ban has been proposed in the Wisconsin legislature, it has not been voted on.



## MADISON: MAKING AMENDS AS A COMMUNITY

By: *Anvika Annyapu*

As the country reckons with racial justice, activism has flourished in our local community. With steps being taken to remove symbols of racism, educate others, and protests, the student population is leading these local efforts.

In a series of demands that were in protest of the police killings of George Floyd & Breonna Taylor, one demand was finally fulfilled. On August 9th, the Chamberlin Rock was removed from the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus after students of the Wisconsin Black Student Union and Native American student organization Wunk Sheek called the rock a symbol of racism. This was in part because of an article in the Wisconsin State Journal in 1925 that used a racial slur to describe the rock. Nalah McWhorter, president of the Wisconsin BSU said in a news release that “It was about a year ago that we released our demands and met with the chancellor and explained to her why those demands meant so much to us ... It was a powerful moment today to see this demand come full circle.”

As students at a predominantly white institution, UW students of color have cited that they don't feel fully welcome or comfortable at the school and in order to address this issue, UW-Madison, specifically, has placed a focus on recognizing individuals and the different backgrounds they come from. For example, the Engagement, Inclusion & Diversity council has been focusing more on educating people through forums, helping students financially with scholarships, and more. In addition, the Wisconsin Union has taken extra efforts to address racial injustice using the resources they had, as an article from their official blog states, “Each committee wrote a statement highlighting their goals and plans for their year involving social justice and worked hard to meet those goals ... As a whole, WUD promoted social justice beyond simply programming. Numerous officers also worked closely with Wisconsin Union departments, including facilities, dining, and social education, to enhance inclusiv-

ity.” The director of the 2020-21 WUD Alternative Breaks Committee director related the Wisconsin Union to a living room, saying, “The living room is a place of comfort in a home, and if everyone doesn't feel safe in the living room of this campus, how can it be effective?”

These racial justice efforts are present downtown as well. When Madison was struggling with looting and violent protests, the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art was boarded up. Now, nearly a year later, the giant glass window has confessions from different people in the city. This art installation invited people to anonymously write “letters to the world toward eradication of racism.” This is only part of what is being done downtown. In fact, in September of 2020, the city council of Madison passed a \$750k program centered around black businesses known as the “Small Business Equity & Recovery Program.” This was geared towards helping the institutional inequality present in business and providing assistance.

As a whole, these are only a few steps the community and government has taken in response to the racial reckoning our city faced. As usual, there is more room for improvement as some businesses on State Street say that the government assistance was too little too late. It will be challenging to bring an end to the racism present throughout our city, but through these efforts, it seems more likely.



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE PASSES TWO ANTI-TRANS SPORTS BILLS, DRAWS CONDEMNATION AND PROTESTS

By: *Amira Pierotti*

Wisconsin State Assembly passed two bills banning trans K-12 and college athletes from participating on teams that best align with their gender. The Senate has yet to pass the two equivalent bills which would make the bans laws. Governor Evers, many Democratic lawmakers, and a coalition of LGBTQ+ and human rights organizations have fought to stop the bills. For many athletes and communities on both sides of the issue, the months of uncertainty have been filled with anxiety.

In March, Representative Barbara Dietrich (R-Oconomowoc) announced the “Protect Women in Sports Act” that would prevent transgender and gender-expansive students from playing on school sports teams that do not “match” the sex on their birth certificate or are co-ed. Dietrich claimed “[i]t’s an issue of standing for women’s achievement, not cutting anyone out of women’s achievement,” but trans rights advocates share a different story.

Brian Juchems, Co-Executive Director of GSAFE, shared “Trans girls are girls. Trans boys are boys. [Nonbinary people are nonbinary]. Trans athletes

benefit from participation in sports just in the same ways that cisgender students do and they deserve to have that access and experience.” Randi Hagen, a Madison resident and trans woman added, declaring “I am a woman, and this bill does not protect me. I am a woman, and this bill will harm me.”

During public hearings in May, tensions ran high. Some proponents of the bills called trans kids “delusional,” “indoctrinated,” and “[assaulters],” while doctors noted no inherent biological athletic difference between sexes. Adult cis women athletes shared their distress at losing to a trans woman, while others noted the same woman lost to a cis counterpart in other races. As parents shared their concerns for their daughters’ participation in sports, trans youth and adults shared the danger of outing trans youth by forcing them to play on sports teams that do not align with their gender. Cis girl athletes shared their sadness at the possibility of losing trans athletes while cis women shared their concern that trans women are really just lying men. Trans advocates noted trans men and nonbinary people are also harmed nor are they lying about their genders.



In June, the Assembly passed their two bills, much to the anger of the trans community and allies. Over the course of the spring and summer, activists staged three protests at the Capitol providing space for trans people to share their pain and community love. If the Senate passes the bills as well, Governor Evers has promised to veto. Republicans do not have the votes to override, ensuring the bills cannot become law during this legislative session.

# INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## HAITI REELS, REBUILDS AFTER ASSASSINATION, EARTHQUAKE

*By: Anvika Annyapu, Mihika Shivakumar, & Amira Pierotti*

On early July 7, Haiti's President Jovenel Moïse was assassinated in his bedroom. He was killed by a band of foreign mercenaries, who authorities claim were recruited by a Florida-based Haitian pastor planning to replace Moïse as President. His presidency was a tumultuous one, marked by anti-corruption protests against embezzling funds, and the rise of over 100 gangs in Haiti. But the policies implemented by Moïse created many enemies: his attempts at canals ended up destroying the environment in the poorer parts of Haiti.

The pandemic was especially difficult for developing countries, and Haiti faced vaccine mistrust due to the government, a lack of coordinated responses, and more. After the country as a whole seemed to be shifting towards an autocracy with Moïse ruling by decree, the opposition party decided to take matters into their own hands. They pushed for Moïse to resign, but after a constitutional crisis, that matter never was resolved. People took to the streets to protest: some in favor of Moïse and others against him.

But the problems in Haiti's government go much deeper than the current president. Despite being a country with a majority black population, the country is led by few white families of billionaires, ones that hide behind the country's population despite controlling nearly every business. The country isn't governable because they don't allow it to be. The country isn't a classic example of "black rule," as many suggest, because of the racial conflict that is at the root of all the country's issues. Moïse's policies famously attempted to help darker skinned Haitians over lighter skinned ones.

Centuries of targeted economic and military policies by white-led countries in the Global North has continued to destabilize Haiti. Ever since the Haitian revolution, the only fully successful slave revolt which was led by Toussaint L'Ouverture against the French, governments with large stakes in white supremacy

have sought to block any and all Haitian progress. The litany of harms includes the French military actions to retake the former colony in the 19th century, harsh economic policies to repay France for lost money thus creating severe financial instability, and the U.S. military occupation from 1915-1934 that killed thousands, silenced dissidents and activists, and harmed the financial interests of Haitians. This instability directly lead to dictatorships and coups. Haiti is the poorest country in Latin America and the Caribbean, according to the World Bank, making it difficult to handle the Presidential assassination, poverty, and the August earthquake.

While grieving, the country had to decide on a successor. Unfortunately, this line of succession is foggy at best. The highest member of the court is the ideal choice according to Haiti's constitution, but he recently passed away from COVID. The interim prime minister, Claude Joseph, is a likely candidate for president, but he would have to be confirmed by the Parliament. However, Moïse had worked to dissolve segments of Parliament while simultaneously making others irrelevant, claiming that the pandemic prevented the nation from holding elections for the legislative branch of government. However, this led to little Parliamentary oversight of the President. As Haiti works to unify the government to better handle the pandemic, political turmoil, and poverty.

On the morning of August 14, a deadly earthquake struck Haiti, with a magnitude of 7.2. As a country that never fully recovered from the earthquake of 2010, this earthquake could not have hit at a worse time, especially with the current political unrest in the country. According to BBC, over 2,000 Haitians were killed and over 12,000 injured. UNICEF believes 1.2 million people have been impacted with over 50,000 homes destroyed and widespread shortages of water, food, and healthcare. As the country reels, the international community has worked to provide support to Haiti. But the New York Times notes widespread distrust of the government has left communities in despair. Haitians have used community care and mutual aid to uplift each other for generations in the wake of successive traumas and crises.

## UIGHURS HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS UPDATE

*By: Anvika Annyapu*

The Uighurs are the largest minority group in China. China has been accused of committing “crimes against humanity” and possibly genocide against this Muslim-ethnic group. The US and various other countries have led the accusations against China and human rights groups Amnesty and Human Rights Watch have also pushed these accusations. In late 2018, the UN released a report detailing that China was detaining Uighurs in camps in Xinjiang. With China denying the allegations and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo on Donald Trump’s last day in office

declaring that “China was committing crimes against humanity,” the situation escalated.

More than a million out of the twelve million Uighurs are said to be held in detention camps. People are being used for forced labor, mistreated, and some are being tortured.

As there is no solid action to be taken, with the 2022 Winter Olympics to be held in Beijing, there have been calls and legal complaints to boycott the Olympics. Although the International Olympic Committee has stated that “it’s not their role to solve geopolitical issues,” we can only hope that the correct course of action is taken in the end.

## THE CATASTROPHIC UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE REPORT

*By: Anvika Annyapu*

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change convened and compiled a report on August 9th, 2021 declaring that humanity was facing a code red in regards to climate change. From human impact, the world has warmed up by more than 1° Celsius.

Countries have been trying to take steps to keep the warming of the planet below 1.5 degrees Celsius. One goal countries set was through the Paris Climate Accords, an agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to limit the global temperature increase in this century to 2 degrees Celsius above pre industrial levels.

IPCC scientists warn that without immediate drastic action, there will be catastrophic consequences. There are a few possible paths that have been predicted for our future. One, the most optimistic, is a path where the world takes efforts to dramatically reduce carbon emissions, reaching zero in the next few decades and CO2 rates are cut down through cutting-edge technologies. This will require great political will and cooperation. We may also reach 2° - 3° Celcius by the end of the century or 6° C by 2090. This will lead to more climate disasters like the wildfires, floods, and droughts present currently, and sea levels will continue rising.

## INDIA BANS SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

*By: Anvika Annyapu*

With the devastating climate report released, countries have started focusing their efforts on climate change. India, touted as a “developing” country, has taken a major first step to reducing carbon emissions. To be effective on July 1st, 2022, an initiative has been passed banning a wide array of single-use plastics.

The rule states, “The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of (the) following single-use plastic, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene, commodities shall be prohibited with effect from July 1, 2022.”

According to the rule, the manufacturer is responsible for upholding this rule. They decide what is no longer deemed necessary.

The Environment Ministry has also started looking into effective recycling and set up a national-level task force to eliminate more single-use plastics. They’re also working with 14 out of the 29 states to initiate more recycling of things that are recyclable, such as water bottles.

# JULY CUBA UPRISINGS ROCK COUNTRY, GIVE HOPE

By: *Amira Pierotti*

In July, the world was stunned by the force and power of Cuban protestors demanding change by the thousands. Advocates demanded an end to the single-party communist rule that has cracked down against freedom and civil liberties for decades. Myriad versions of the driving force behind the protests have floated around the American press. Here are a few need-to-know points and resources to learn more!

## **What are the Protests About?**

Since the end of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, the promises of a people-led government have remained unfulfilled. Fidel Castro's government and communist party were meant to end a line of dictatorships but resulted in a single-party government with no accountability and suppression of human rights. While many leftists tired of colonialistic capitalism have long celebrated how Cuban people created a new government, Assistant Professor Jorge Felipe-Gonzalez at University of Texas San Antonio wrote rebuked such a view, saying it is "steeped in a sense of Cuba as it was in the 1980s—and that Cuba no longer exists."

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Cuban economy has struggled. Food rationing, high prices for necessities, and spotty power access have been impactful symptoms of the economic pitfall. The COVID-19 pandemic has made the economy deteriorate further as tourism has been an essential business. Black communities have been especially hard hit-- white Cubans own 98% of private businesses and are 4.6 times more likely to have a bank account compared to Afro-Cubans, according to the German Institute for Global and Area Studies. Poverty, economic crises, along with suppression of opposition and human rights led to the July protests.

Protesters called for an end to the communist government shouting "down with the dictatorship," "we are not afraid," and "homeland and life," BBC and The New York Times report. Freedom of speech has not been guaranteed, making the peaceful protests extraordinary. Thousands took to the streets to demand their

rights and positive change. "I told the state security guard who arrested me, 'You're going to have to change. This is the people, and not just the people, but the youth. Look at them: They've decided they are not just going to continue leaving the country — they want change here'" Guillermo Fariñas shared with the New York Times. Fariñas is a longstanding dissident who has been spent long times in prison for his advocacy and has done many famous hunger strikes.

## **How did the Cuban Government Respond?**

Police and special forces called "Black Berets" have arrested hundreds, including those who were reportedly nowhere near the demonstrations. Reports that protestors have been convicted in court without even a defense lawyer have made their way through the press. Family and friends continue to share how they do not know what happened to loved ones. At least one journalist, Camila Acosta, who writes for Spanish newspaper ABC was arrested in Cuba for covering the protests and has been held under house arrest. While the number of arrests is not known, Cubalex reported at least 800, 249 of whom have been released. Mirela Cruz was arrested and beaten for questioning police about the whereabouts of her son, Dayton, she told BBC. She faces charges.

## **The Aftermath**

The government cut the internet for 72 hours in August, much to the outcry of human rights advocates across the world. As internet access allowed for the organization of the protests, concern of the crackdown extends to government prevention of further protests.

Many Americans have called on the Biden administration to end the embargo of Cuba. Critics note the economic sanctions have harmed the people more than the government. While the hardships of the Cuban people extend farther than the embargo, many activists have called for the government to take a step as a way to support protestors.

Despite backlash, many Cubans are still hopeful for change. "It felt so good to finally be able to protest in our own country. It's only human to feel fear but that moved to the background because you knew you were doing the right thing - you weren't doing anything wrong or illegal," journalist Alfredo Martínez noted.

# TALIBAN TAKES CONTROL OF AFGHANISTAN, BRINGING CRISIS & FEAR

By: Amira Pierotti

The world was shocked at the speed of the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Last year, the Trump Administration announced removing American troops from the country by August 31st, 2021 and Biden promised to fulfill that goal. Throughout the summer, the situation became more dire as the increasing rate of Taliban takeover threatened to halt the evacuation processes. The international community, human rights organizations, and loved ones are scrambling to get as many Afghans

out of the country as possible, prioritizing historically marginalized communities and supporters of American military efforts. As the situation is continuously developing and international support will be needed after the American evacuation date, stay up-to-date with your preferred news source.

After the terror attacks on 9/11, the U.S. demanded Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar turn over al-Qaida authorities believed to be involved. After their adamant refusal, the Bush Administration began what would become a 20 year war intended to dismantle al-Qaida and the Taliban. However, with the Taliban resurgence, failures in helping Afghan people build long-lasting systems that would keep a stable country free from Taliban rule, and widespread Afghan distrust of the military presence, the goals have

recently seemed unattainable. According to Brown University, 70,000 civilians have been killed in the war, including racist hate crimes by American military members and mass murder via drone strikes. During the Trump Administration, the number of Afghan civilians murdered during American drone strikes skyrocketed 330%, Brown University continued.

With discontent about the war both at home and overseas, President Trump announced the August 31st withdrawal date. In hopes of bringing military members home and preventing more American deaths, Trump pivoted from negotiations with the Taliban to a complete end to the military presence in Afghanistan. Since the war began, nearly 2,500 servicemen have been killed along with nearly 4,000 American contractors. However, many people, including current

and former servicemen in Afghanistan, have noted the rapid evacuation would leave Afghans who supported American efforts stranded, such as interpreters. The Taliban has already threatened many supporters who fear for their lives and the lives of loved ones, according to NBC. The New York Times notes



that as of August 25th, an estimated 250,000 Afghans who supported the American war effort are stranded along with their families, 50,000 of whom have applied for special immigrant visas.

Since the beginning of the U.S. evacuation on May 1st, the Taliban had rapidly increased its control over Afghan territories. The week leading up to the August 17th takeover of Kabul was a flurry of defeats for Taliban opposition. Afghan president Ashraf Ghani and other high-ranking government officials fled, fear-

ing for their lives. The speed and effectiveness of the Taliban affront shocked the international community, leaving countries scrambling to evacuate their citizens. Tens of thousands of Afghans are rushing to leave.

The New York Times reports that 70 thousand people have been evacuated from Afghanistan since August 14th. Another half a million are expected to flee to neighboring countries by the end of the year, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Along with Afghans who worked with the American military, historically marginalized communities are at risk of violence and discrimination. Women face a loss of civil and human rights such as bans from accessing education and many public spaces. LGBTQ+ people are afraid for their lives as the Taliban routinely execute members of the community and due to widespread prejudice, many do not have support networks to help them escape. Canada is the only country that has explicitly pledged to help evacuate LGBTQ+ Afghans. Gay and Afghan-American novelist Nemat Sedat told Reuters that “[LGBTQ+ people] are messaging [him, saying] ‘What can we do? We’re going to get exterminated.’” A contact of Sedat, an American working in Kabul, shared with the news

organization that “he was unsure even how to get LGBTQ+ people safely through the city.”

For those who can get to the airport, the situation is still incredibly dire. At least 12 people have died at the airport from accidents such as falling off planes and being trampled by the mobs. On August 26th, the Biden Administration announced a credible terrorist threat against the Kabul airport, the last functioning one in the country. Tens of thousands of people have flocked to the airport in hopes of getting a last ride out. However, a suicide bomber at the airport entrance and another at a nearby hotel killed over 180 people and wounding hundreds more. 13 American servicemen were among the dead. To prevent a second attack, the U.S. launched another drone strike at a car carrying what military officials believed to be an ISIS-K bomb. The strike was not related to the prior attack. Afghans are appalled that nine civilians, including one child, were killed in the attack.

With currently 2.6 million Afghan refugees from the two decades-long war, according to the U.N. and 250 Americans estimated to still be in Afghanistan according to CNN, the crisis will continue to unfold.

## HOW TO SUPPORT AFGHAN REFUGEES

By: Amira Pierotti

### Donate:

*Rainbow Railroad:* Works to move LGBTQ+ refugees to welcoming countries with minimal prejudice

*Women for Afghan Women:* A grassroots organization of mostly Afghan and Muslim people working for women’s rights in Afghanistan

*Malala Fund:* Malala Yousafzai’s organization working to increase women’s access to education

### Volunteer:

To help with Afghan refugee relocation, volunteer with Lutheran Immigration and Relocation Services

### Contact Representatives:

Myriad human rights organizations have created templates to ask Congress, President Biden, and local officials to increase support for refugees.

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## UPCOMING MARVEL MOVIES AND SHOWS

By: *Nadya Konadu*

Because of a year of multiple closures, there has been a serious lack of new Marvel movies and shows. However, there is good news: tons of new Marvel movies/shows are coming in late 2021. So we've compiled the definitive list of what's coming in Phase 4, along with confirmed release dates for the films that have them.

**What If..?** – September 11, 2021

An animated series that takes classic Marvel characters but puts a twist on them to change the stories as we know them, in critical ways.

**Shang-Chi and The Legend of the Ten Rings** – September 3, 2021

The first film with a predominantly Asian cast in the MCU. Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings is about a martial artist Shang-Chi is forced to deal with his past, as the Ten Rings organization pulls him in.

**Venom: Let There Be Carnage** – September 24, 2021

Tom Hardy's Eddie Brock will meet his worst nightmare in Woody Harrelson's own symbiotic alter ego in this sequel.

**Eternals** – November 5, 2021

A new superhero team joining the MCU when Mar-

vel's Eternals hits theaters in late 2021. Angelina Jolie, Kumail Nanjiani, Bryan Tyree Henry, and others make up the cast of ageless beings responsible for shaping and protecting Earth's greatest civilizations.

**Hawkeye** – November 24, 2021

The Hawkeye show will see Clint Barton (Renner) train Kate Bishop (Hailee Steinfeld) as the new Hawkeye. The series, which will trace the lines first written and drawn by Matt Fraction and David Aja in the character-defining comic book run, will see the two fight with the mafia group known as Tracksuit Draculas.

**Ms. Marvel** – November 11, 2021

Kamala Khan (Ms. Marvel) will become one of the youngest members of the MCU in her very own Disney Plus series. Khan, Marvel's first Muslim character with their own comic book, will be portrayed by Iman Vellani. It's a fitting meta-story, with Ms. Marvel being the new kid on the big block in the Marvel world. Khan is a fan of Captain Marvel and gains shape-shifting superpowers.

**Spider-Man: No Way Home** – December 17, 2021

Rumors have long suggested Tom Holland is collaborating with former Peter Parker actors Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield, in this third installment as the web slinger. Plus, Jamie Foxx could reprise Electro along with Alfred Molina returning to play Doctor Octopus in what is looking to be the most ambitious live-action Spidey movie yet.



# SUMMER SONGS

By: Amy Qiao

What a summer for music- concerts are slowly returning, Doja Cat dropped a new album, and Lorde released new music. But with the end of summer approaching and a new school year starting, we're all experiencing a whole bunch of emotions. To make things a little easier, here are three playlists that will hopefully match one of your feelings:

## Songs To Feel Like It's Still Summer:

- Powerslide- Ryan Beatty
- Mango- Peach Tree Rascals
- Top Again- Audrey Nuna Featuring Saba
- Tongue Tied- Grouplove
- Chicken Tenders- Dominic Fike
- Cocoa Butter Kisses- The Stairwells
- Can You Hear The Moon- Grady
- Motive- Ariana Grande Featuring Doja Cat

## Songs To Mourn the End of Summer:

- July- Noah Cyrus
- West Coast City- Tucker Rivera
- Space- Audrey Nuna
- Light Year- Adam Melchor Featuring Lennon Stella
- Fall Apart- Claire Rosinkranz
- Honest- Jeremy Zucker
- Pass You By- Alaina Castillo
- Nothing's The Same- Jeremy Zucker And Alexander 23

## The Best Of The Best Dropped Summer 2021:

- Solar Power- Lorde
- I Like That- Bazzi
- Literally The Entire Planet Her Album- Doja Cat
- forever&more- Role Model
- Happy To Be Sad- Ben Platt
- Headline- Bren Joy
- Blouse- Clairo
- People Watching- Conan Gray



## OUTER BANKS SEASON 2 REVIEW

By: Anvika Annyapu and Britney Tang

After a cliffhanger that left the audience on the edge of their seats, the Pogues are back at it with another adventure. At the end of season 1, we saw that John B. and Sarah Cameron made it through the storm and headed to the Bahamas. It seems that the pile of gold is just within their reach. But, nothing ever comes easy for Pogues and when the young couple arrive in paradise, they are met with overwhelming obstacles and wild goose chases. They find themselves in tight situations, putting at risk the odds of them surviving. Back on the mainland, Pope, Kie, and JJ mourn the loss of their friends until they all get a text message from an unknown number with a picture of Sarah and John B—alive. With this information, the 3 friends must clear John B's name so he can come home. The rest of the season shows the respective groups navigating the challenges they face. We get to see a new side to our main characters that we haven't seen in the first season. The plot thickens as a new treasure hunt is introduced and the way the characters change and adapt is admirable. Overall, this season is jam-packed with several close calls, life-threatening showdowns, plot twists, and more. Season 2 leaves you wanting more and to see what is next for the group.





## BAD HABITS SINGLE

By: Amy Qiao

Almost two years after Ed Sheeran's latest studio album release, *Bad Habits* was released as his lead single for his upcoming fifth studio album. His latest single not only marks the first solo release from an album in almost four years but has also garnered immense success, debuting at number 5 on the Billboard charts. With all that being said, however, the song has received mixed reviews from critics.

Multiple critics compared Ed Sheeran to The Weeknd, and hey, if you're being compared to The Weeknd, you're doing something right. But many fans have taken to Twitter, claiming he "stole" The Weeknd's *After Hours* aesthetic, with *Independent's* Adam White going so far as to say that he's "rummaging through Abel Tesfaye's leftovers."

*Bad Habits* is also noticeably different from Sheeran's previous songs, using primarily synth tracks and less acoustic guitar. It's completely normal and quite common for artists to change their sound and style, and many seem to be a fan of Sheeran's new look, but some, such as Max Williams, author for the University of Southampton's entertainment newspaper, feel that his latest hit is "heavily synth-based to the point of ostracizing Sheeran's acoustic guitar," one of the reasons his fans fell in love with his music. I have to admit, upon first listen, I was surprised to see that it was an Ed Sheeran song. Especially after his last album, *No. 6 Collaborations Project*, I was a bit underwhelmed by how generic his latest release was. But it's not uncommon for the solo release of an album to get mixed reviews while still being part of an amazing album, so his upcoming album definitely has the potential to be a fan favorite, and I hope he proves the critics wrong.

## THE SUICIDE SQUAD MOVIE REVIEW

By: Nadya Konadu

The following is a spoiler-free review of *Suicide Squad*, provided you've seen the trailer. As a longtime DC Comics fan and lone defender of its 2016 precursor, I was really looking forward to this movie. And my anticipation was proven acceptable after seeing the film.

Where to start! This movie has everything and anything you could want from the squad on the big screen. Laughter, violence, Amanda Waller threatening to blow someone's head off, and a giant mutant shark devouring entire people. This movie had a lot of surprises and we had a lot of characters to explore, to say the least, including Harley Quinn, Captain Boomerang, and Rick Flag, but also a lot of new characters like King Shark, Bloodsport, Ratcatcher 2, and my favorite, Polka Dot Man.

Overall, the story was great and the effects were perfect. You could tell this was a big budget and a classic James Gunn movie, and much better than I expected. I recommend you to go and see it in the cinema, or on HBO Max!



# BACK TO SCHOOL WORD SEARCH

By: Nadya Konadu

B K H O B A C K P A C K  
P L R E S A R E T H O K  
E U E S P S E S O I O C  
N N T N C A R M N O P C  
C C T O E S E E B E R S  
I H I Y H W O E K A P A  
L B L A O L T P E R M B  
S O G R A O S L R A A A  
K X K C N O E R O C A M  
A X P E N C I L C A S E  
B O O K S C I S S O R S  
R K S S A P M O C T Y T  
O S H A R P E N E R M B  
R S B X L A N R U O J S

CRAYONS  
SCISSORS  
NOTEBOOK  
MARKERS  
ERASER

LUNCH BOX  
COMPASS  
BACKPACK  
SHARPENER  
PENS

BOOKS  
JOURNAL  
HOMEWORK  
GLITTER  
PENCILS

## BUCKS END DROUGHT, WIN NBA TITLE

By Nolan Sullivan

The Milwaukee Bucks are NBA Champions! A sentence that hadn't been uttered for 50 years finally came to fruition this July. Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Milwaukee Bucks defeated the Phoenix Suns in 6 games, winning 4 in a row after falling down 0-2 in the series. Antetokounmpo won Finals MVP after averaging an astounding 35.2 points, 13.2 rebounds, and 5 assists per game, and to cap it all off, he scored 50 points in the series finale. While Giannis certainly pulled his own weight during this title run, the three-headed attack of him, Khris Middleton, and Jrue Holiday proved that they will be a force to be reckoned with for years to come out of the Eastern Conference. And while it's easy to forget about the contributions from lesser-known players, guys like Bobby Portis and P.J. Tucker deserve equally as much respect for consistently giving their all on the defensive side of the ball and knocking down some big shots when needed the most.

After seeing Milwaukee take home the Larry O'Brien trophy, the rest of the league began preparing for their attempt at dethroning the Bucks next season, starting at the NBA Draft. While it's safe to say that most of the teams with lottery picks won't be anywhere near title contenders next year, you never know what team will pick a player that could be the missing piece to the puzzle or turn into an All-Star in just a couple of seasons. As for the Detroit Pistons' first overall pick, while there was some chatter about them potentially leaning towards guard Jalen Green who eventually ended up in Houston, they stuck to their guns and selected the 19-year old guard from Oklahoma State, Cade Cunningham. After the fact, Green was glad that Detroit passed on him, saying that "I wanted to be the number one pick, but as for the location, I didn't want to be in Detroit."

Just days after the draft wrapped up, teams prepared to open up their checkbooks for free agency.

While a lot of the most notable free agents such as Kawhi Leonard, Chris Paul, and John Collins opted to resign with their respective teams, there were still a variety of moves that could shake up the standings. In the East, both the Chicago Bulls and Miami Heat had their fair share of big splashes once free agency opened up. In South Beach, they re-signed both Jimmy Butler and Duncan Robinson, while also adding point guard Kyle Lowry on a 3 year \$90 million deal. The Bulls on the other hand, made two big sign and trade moves to acquire Lonzo Ball from New Orleans and Demar Derozan from San Antonio. It will be interesting to see how these players mesh with their new teams and if any of these moves prove vital in the landscape of the Eastern Conference.



## COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEW

By Nolan Sullivan

While most college football fans across the country did get to see their favorite schools play in some way, shape, or form last season, it's safe to say this upcoming season will be a big step up in many ways. Firstly, fans are expected to be able to return to nearly every stadium in some capacity and each conference will be back to their regular game schedules. On top of that, with teams getting vaccinated at high rates such as Ole Miss, who already achieved a 100% vaccination rate out of all players and staff despite

*cont.*

being in one of the states with the lowest rates, it is expected that we will see far fewer cancellations this upcoming season compared to last year.

When it comes to the on-field side of things, the preseason AP Top 25 poll has introduced a few not so familiar teams to the rankings, many of whom are expected to shake things up in their respective conferences. You typically expect to see schools like Iowa State and North Carolina ranked in the mid twenties of the AP poll, but this year, both teams are set to do damage in their respective conferences. In Ames, Senior quarterback Brock Purdy looks poised to take the Cyclones to the Big-12 Championship game with a balanced offensive attack. Their stout offensive line, top

tight end Charlie Kolar, and superstar tailback Breece Hall gave defenses plenty of trouble last season, and this is beginning to look like the year that Oklahoma loses its grip on the conference. Over in Chapel Hill, the Tar Heels of North Carolina are in a similar position as Iowa State. Despite losing a variety of starters on the offensive side of the ball to the NFL, quarterback Sam Howell and the impressive recent recruiting classes should have little to no trouble replacing that production. And while the defense wasn't as flashy as the star studded offense was last year, North Carolina returns 10 of their 11 guys on that side of the ball and will use that experience to combat Clemson for control of the ACC.

## MESSI FORCED TO LEAVE FC BARCELONA IN SHOCKING EXIT

*By Nolan Sullivan*

After being at FC Barcelona for a monumental 21 years, Lionel Messi, arguably the greatest soccer player of all time, underwent a shocking departure from his boyhood club in early August. Despite having verbally agreed to a 5-year extension earlier in the summer, the Argentine was unable to put pen to paper due to the recently altered La Liga financial fair play rules put in place. In his emotional farewell press conference, after being asked if this was the hardest moment of his career, Messi said, "no doubt, this is the hardest moment. We had hurtful defeats but football gives you a chance to avenge that. But there is no turning point to this." Just days after that difficult goodbye, Messi accepted an offer to join the French club, Paris Saint-Germain. There he will join some familiar faces such as Neymar who previously starred at Barcelona, along with fellow Argentinian national teammates Ángel Di María and Leandro Paredes. Even though it will be difficult for many fans to see Messi in any club's kit other than Barcelona's, his new ventures in Paris should prove to be more than entertaining given all of the talent surrounding him.

Earlier in the summer, fans around the world were treated to two of the biggest international competitions in the sport. In Europe, we saw the Euros kick off in early June, and likewise in South America, there

was Copa América. Unfortunately due to COVID-19 they were unable to host fans at the Copa América which was being held in Brazil, but for the Euros, which were played all across the continent, fans filled various stadiums and rooted for their nations. After missing the 2018 World Cup altogether, a completely revamped Italy side dominated game after game to be eventually crowned Euro champions over the final match's host, England. Similarly, in Rio de Janeiro, host nation Brazil were ousted by Argentina 1-0. On one side, the Italians won their first Euro tournament in 53 years, and on the other, Lionel Messi was able to add his first ever international trophy to his never-ending collection of silverware.



# NFL QB BATTLES LEADING UP TO WEEK ONE

*By Nolan Sullivan*

Many people may believe that NFL preseason games aren't very useful, but they provide teams a lot of insight into their players, allowing them to make decisions on who to start, bench, and cut. One of the most important decisions that teams must make is to figure out their quarterback situation. While many teams already have this problem figured out, others are still weighing their options leading up to week one.

Our first battle lies in Jacksonville, where the #1 overall pick in this past NFL draft, Trevor Lawrence, is battling it out with Jacksonville's previous starter, Gardner Minshew. While Minshew was a very solid starter for Jacksonville, all eyes are on the rookie from Clemson. Lawrence started in the Jaguars' first game against Cleveland, posting up modest numbers after appearing in a couple drives. Minshew's numbers were sub-par, and it seems as if Lawrence is on track to be the Jaguars' starter in the regular season.

The San Francisco 49ers are in a similar position as the Jaguars are, as they have a former starting quarterback competing with a rookie. Jimmy Garoppolo, the quarterback behind San Francisco's super bowl berth 2 years prior, is competing with the #3 overall pick Trey Lance, a rookie out of NDSU. Garoppolo was the starter in the 49ers' first preseason game, and only played one drive, which ended in a punt. Trey Lance, on the other hand, played a few drives, including one which ended on an 80 yard catch-and-run touchdown. Garoppolo's very likely going to be awarded the starting job based off of past experience, but Lance has left a good impression on many fans and coaches alike.

Another team that drafted a promising rookie quarterback was the New England Patriots, who will also have a QB battle going on between a rookie and a veteran. Former NFL MVP Cam Newton has earned starter reps so far, but Mac Jones, the rookie out of Alabama, has been threatening to take his job. Newton will likely hold the starting spot at the beginning

of the season, but it's looking more and more like Jones will eventually end up becoming the Patriots' quarterback for the future.

Lastly, the New Orleans Saints are also viewing a QB battle between Jameis Winston and Taysom Hill. This battle's very tight between the two, Hill started the first preseason game but Winston is reportedly starting in their next game. Both had decent games against the Ravens, and Winston led the Saints to score two touchdowns, the only two in the game. It will be interesting to see how New Orleans fills in at the position after losing long-time starter Drew Brees to retirement.

Each of these battles displays how important teams value good quarterback play in today's NFL, and every snap taken during camp and preseason games allows for teams to make very important decisions for the future of their franchise.



## CHAOTIC TRADE DEADLINE BUILDS UP TO INTENSE PLAYOFF BASEBALL RACE

*By Nolan Sullivan*

This year's Major League Baseball trade deadline was arguably the best we have seen in the modern era. In a year already filled with a plethora of teams ready to contend, we saw the rich get richer, some that might've forgotten that the deadline was even coming up, and franchises that opted to tear it all down during the fateful days leading up to July 30th.

Two of the most notable "sellers" at this year's

*cont.*

deadline were the Washington Nationals and Chicago Cubs. While both teams had won a World Series in the latter half of the 2010s, ownership and fans began growing frustrated at their inability to make deep playoff runs after those title wins. The Cubs said goodbye to a total of nine players this deadline, most notably their long-time infield trio of Anthony Rizzo, Kris Bryant, and Javier Baez. While the Nationals only parted ways with seven players, their package deal that sent ace Max Scherzer and infielder Trea Turner to the Dodgers shocked the baseball world. Already having one of the top records in baseball, Los Angeles looks as if it has the talent to repeat as Champions this fall. As for the Nationals and Cubs, while it surely doesn't look like they'll be back in the postseason in the near future, both teams have young pieces to build around and completely revamped farm systems with lots of upside.

Another one of the main stories of this year's trade deadline surprisingly wasn't about a team that made any big splashes, rather quite the opposite. After trading Nolan Arenado to the Cardinals this February and taking on a big portion of his contract, the Rockies clearly didn't see themselves in a spot to contend this year. Despite that, management opted to hold onto star shortstop Trevor Story, who becomes a free agent this offseason. Even Story himself said that he was "confused" as to why the Rockies didn't trade him, which signifies how poorly run the team is at the moment.



## LIGHTNING STORM THEIR WAY TO SECOND STRAIGHT STANLEY CUP WIN

By *Nolan Sullivan*

Entering the National Hockey League playoffs as the playoff team with the least amount of regular season points, it's safe to say that nobody expected the Montreal Canadiens to go on the run they did this postseason. After falling down 3-1 in their initial playoff series against the Toronto Maple Leafs, the idea of them even getting out of the first round became even more far-fetched. Yet, against all odds, Montreal fought back to beat the Maple Leafs in seven games, then went on to take down Winnipeg and Las Vegas in just a combined ten games. Just like that, the Canadiens were back in the Stanley Cup Finals with a chance to win their first title since 1993. With netminder Carey Price holding things down in the defensive zone, and forwards like Nick Suzuki, Tyler Toffoli, and rookie Cole Caufield from Wisconsin on impressive runs of form, it seemed as if nobody would be able to put a stop to this improbable run. But as they say, all good things must come to an end.

Despite being tied for fourth in the league in points heading into the playoffs, fans and players knew that the Tampa Bay Lightning had the experience and championship pedigree to repeat as Stanley Cup Champions. The Canadiens didn't go down without a fight, winning Game 4 of the series 3-2 in overtime, but all in all, Tampa Bay outscored Montreal 17-8 across the five game series, and took home their third Stanley Cup Trophy since being founded in 1992. Tampa Bay held each of the top five spots for playoff points leaders, with winger Nikita Kucherov leading the charge tallying up an impressive 32 points. As for their defense, there was no lack of talent there. Goaltender Andrei Vasilevskiy led all playoff goalies with a save percentage of .937%, and defender Victor Hedman had 18 points of his own to lead all defensemen. With stats like those, nobody should be surprised that the Lightning were able to put on such a dominant performance across the entire postseason.

# OPINIONS

## SHOULD THE TOKYO OLYMPICS HAVE BEEN HELD THIS YEAR?

By: *Amy Qiao*

Obviously, they already happened, but that won't stop me from sharing my opinion about it! In all seriousness, however, it is still important to reflect on the Olympics, even after the fact, so we can make well-informed decisions about the next Olympics and prevent issues from happening again. The Tokyo Olympics were a very debated Olympic games, with athletes eager to compete and protesters and health officials unsure about health concerns.

To reflect on the games, it's important to first take a look at why so many pushed for them to happen this summer. One reason was the cost it takes to maintain the equipment and buildings in the Olympic village. The AP News reported in an article last December that the delay increased the price of the Olympics by \$2.8 billion. Plus, some officials and IOC members had hope in containing Covid-19 amidst growing cases in several participating countries. Amesh Adalja, at Johns Hopkins, explains in an interview with Vox, "If you could do an NBA or NHL season without a vaccine and have zero cases, this can be done if people actually put the resources into place to do it." Also, BioNTech and Pfizer made an agreement with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to provide vaccines to athletes and other attendees from participating countries. Finally, many felt that the Tokyo Olympics would have to be in 2021, or there would be no Summer Olympics until the 2024 Paris Games. Knowing that 2021 would most likely be the last chance for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics to happen, plus the hope for a relatively Covid-free Olympic games, pushed the decision for the Olympic games to proceed.

However, the role that the Olympics played in spreading Covid-19 is not definite. While Covid cases in Tokyo are at an all-time high, Reuters reports that Olympic organizers "carried out close to 600,000 screening tests with the infection rate of 0.02%," which is not too bad. But Koji Wada, professor of public

health at the International University of Health and Welfare in Tokyo, reports to Reuters that the Tokyo Olympics "undermined public messaging, with authorities calling on people... to avoid contact with others, while athletes screamed, hugged and patted each other on the backs." The mixed messages might have contributed to the increase of Covid cases in Tokyo.

The effect of the Tokyo Olympic Games on public health is not completely clear, but there is still a lot to take away and learn. If we use the Olympic games to spread messages that will decrease the risk of Covid and keep health concerns as the top priority, we can create a possibility for athletes to show off their amazing talents.

## ALL-GENDER RESTROOMS: A NOTE FROM A TRANS PERSON

By: *Amira Pierotti*

As a nonbinary person, there are only two toilets in Memorial I can use: the two all-gender stalls. I am not alone in these restrictions. From trans students who need a safe place to pee to disabled students who cannot access some other bathroom facilities to students who get harassed in bathrooms, the all-gender restrooms are necessary for many youths to go to class. However, many students who are able to use the main restrooms instead use those two stalls. The reality is that the gender-neutral restrooms are only available in the middle of class, and the wait is ten minutes long. Losing an entire class period a week to be able to pee once a school day is not reasonable. This is a short op-ed to simply ask: if you do not need to use the all-gender restrooms, for whatever reason, please let others use them.



**ALL-GENDER  
RESTROOM**

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM ONLINE SCHOOL

By: Amy Qiao

Although online school was confusing and challenging to navigate, there were a few changes that many students found beneficial. Before we get swept up in the new school year, let's consider what we can incorporate into our learning process.

To begin with, many students appreciated having more flexibility in due dates. While due dates are still great for motivating students to turn in assignments, perhaps we don't need the same strict rules we had before, such as refusal to accept work after the due date or taking off 50% of a grade for being one day late. The additional flexibility can mean a lot to students that are having a hard time, and as long as students continue to put in their fair share of effort, it can even increase their learning. Admittedly, many students might have taken the lenient due dates a bit too far during on-line school, but students also had a lot on their minds during an especially tough year. More flexibility with due dates does not mean students should turn in their assignments weeks or months late but simply that we should prioritize the learning process and student health over strict due dates.

Plus, increased class material online could be convenient. Even as school returns to in-person learning, we can continue to keep a part of it online. Having homework assignments and class notes posted in one convenient spot made schoolwork a bit easier. Plus, if students forget to write down something in class or leave their books at school, they would still have access to the information they need. This can also be great for teachers, as they won't have to worry about students forgetting the homework assignment or not having the resources they need if they miss class. While we don't need online school to the extent it was last year, we can still take advantage of the practical parts.

Lastly, many classes had an increased focus on recent events compared to previous years. During a hectic year of news and so many important topics to keep up with, it was beneficial to involve these topics in our classwork. While not every class can include this, many classes can. For example, Biology classes discussed the Covid vaccine, English classes talked about voting rights, and History classes connected to many different current events. As we move forward, we can use this as a chance to improve our learning process and increase

our focus on educating students on relevant topics.

Online school was tricky for everyone to figure out, but there are some things we can take away to improve our schools. By acknowledging the lessons we've learned, such as more flexibility in due dates, increased learning material online, and focusing on recent events, we can prioritize the learning experience and student health.



## WHY DISNEY NEEDS TO DIVERSIFY NEW PRINCESSES

By: Nadya Konadu

Disney has designed many princesses loved by people of all ages. However, there is a great lack of princesses of color, and this needs to change.

The very first princess added to the official list of Disney princesses was in 1937, and since then, only five princesses are considered women of color (WOC): Jasmine (Arab), Pocahontas (Native American), Mulan (Chinese), Tiana (African American), and Moana (Polynesian). While the lack of representation may not seem like a major issue at first glance, Disney is one of the largest companies in the world, and its social impact is just as important.

We need princesses that are not just of European descent and white. We need more representation in Disney princesses because girls deserve to see themselves in these movies. That's why it's time for Disney to start diversifying its brand so that other little girls can have someone to look up to.

# OVERRATED?

## IS CLASSICAL MUSIC OVERRATED?

By: *Amy Qiao*

Anyone who pictures an orchestra usually expects an incredibly formal performance accompanied by classical music. While many performances also feature other musical genres, classical music is definitely the overarching genre associated with instrumental music. But is classical music perhaps overpowering other genres of music, leaving little room for different sounds? Or does it make sense to focus on classical music, considering its history and technical elements? There are no definite answers to these questions, but hopefully, they'll guide us in the right direction as we consider what role classical music should play in the music industry today.

Before we look at why classical music can be overrated, let's look at why people enjoy the genre and find it valuable. First, many people find classical music calm and relaxing, and there are plenty of scientific studies that agree. Studies have shown that listening to classical music can reduce anxiety, help insomnia, and improve learning environments. Within the music world, classical music can teach students many useful skills and provide a straightforward way for beginners to learn about technical skills as well as

music theory.

With all that being said, however, the amount of focus we place on classical music can pose some problems. First off, because of prominent discrimination during the Classical period of music, popular composers are usually limited to white, male composers. That isn't to say that there aren't female composers and composers of color, but mainstream classical music rarely includes them. Plus, another concern is that by placing so much focus on music in the past, we could be hindering growth in what music has the potential to become. Classical music takes up a lot of a musician's repertoire, but not as much focus is placed on newer works. With the amount of light put on classical music, there are definitely many ways we can improve the musical genre.

So to revisit the big question, perhaps classical music is properly rated, getting the recognition it deserves while deserving its criticism as well. There's no reason to completely stop using classical music to teach musicians about music skills or to dismiss anyone who prides classical music as their favorite genre (although many of them tend to be a bit pretentious). But there's also no reason to continue using classical music the way we're doing now. Moving forward, we can remember to appreciate the benefits of listening to the genre while also advocating for more inclusion and representation whenever possible.

## BOBA IS OVERRATED

By: *Nadya Konadu*

Boba is not that good- it's overrated. I said it. It's not that great. But I don't hate it. I just think it's overrated. People are going crazy and buying \$100 worth of it just for themselves. Why? Let me tell you why boba isn't worth as much as people say it is.

First of all, boba is expensive. Sure, \$3 to \$6 isn't much, but it adds up. Let me explain. At Kung Fu Tea, the cheapest milk tea is \$3.85 without topping. But with tax, the total is about \$4.06. Sounds cheap, right? Let's say I'm craving boba and have it every day for a week. That's \$28.42 spent just on drinks and not food.

Second, it's either very sweet or very bitter, nothing in between. Depending on the drink, topping, size, and sugar level, boba is either very sweet or very bitter, which doesn't give it much versatility for its level

of sweetness.

Conclusion: For me, boba is overhyped. It's too sweet or too bitter at times, and it's quite expensive for a small amount. But that's just my opinion. I can't stand sweets, and I'm frugal. But don't get me wrong. I crave boba from time to time and buy it maybe two or three times a month.



# VOLUNTEERING IS THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO FOR YOURSELF (AND OTHERS, TOO)

By: Amy Qiao

**Disclaimer:** This article is not meant to pressure you to volunteer; everyone already has enough stress on their minds. This article is simply for anyone yearning for a purpose and bored of monotony.

Volunteering is described as one of the most selfless acts, but there are so many benefits for volunteers, too. Perhaps volunteering is the perfect center between self-care and community care. Volunteering is a great way to get involved in your community and always leaves you with a fuzzy feeling inside.

This makes total sense when you consider that volunteering has been scientifically proven to improve overall mental health. The Mayo Clinic explains that volunteering decreases the risk of depression, as it “increases social interaction and helps build a support system based on common interests.” They also mention that, after volunteering, “you will feel a sense of meaning and appreciation... which can have a

stress-reducing effect.” Stress levels are incredibly important. Rodlescia Sneed, a doctoral candidate in social and health psychology, reports, “we know that stress is very strongly linked to health outcomes.” A Carnegie Mellon study outlines an example of a health outcome impacted by stress, stating that volunteering for 200 hours a year was correlated to lower blood pressure.

Besides improving mental health, volunteering also teaches a myriad of important skills. Volunteering can help you improve communication and teamwork skills, as well as time management, problem-solving, and professionalism.

Clearly, volunteering is great for your health and teaches so many beneficial skills, so you’re probably thinking about ways to get involved! Lucky for you, there are so many ways to get involved, especially at Memorial. Spartans Youth Service is a great way to start volunteering, and it’s easy to join, too.

If you’re interested, email Ms. Wilcox at [acwilcox@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:acwilcox@madison.k12.wi.us) or go to their weekly meetings Wednesdays after school for more details! If you’re looking for other volunteer opportunities specifically related to one of your special skills or interests, contact your counselor for additional volunteer opportunities. You’ll be volunteering in no time!



# WE NEED TO TEACH ABOUT WHITE SUPREMACY: CRT BANS ALLOW AND UPLIFT A CULTURE OF WHITE SILENCE

By: *Amira Pierotti*

After the incredible protests last year, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) have advocated for teaching the accurate history of our country, beginning with the horrors of white supremacy and the groundbreaking advocacy for decolonization. Understanding our history, not the white-washed version too often presumed to be the truth, is paramount to creating an equitable present and future. Erasing the violence of white supremacy means erasing the lives and deaths of countless generations, past and present. Their struggle and advocacy must be shared with youth and adults alike.

Critical Race Theory, education about the systems and harms of white supremacy, is needed to educate the public, a crucial step toward racial justice. Understanding both historical and current systems of injustice as well as their impacts on communities of color is necessary before action. Erasing trauma, pain, and violence will not erase the continuation of injustice; it will only allow it to continue. Banning CRT is not apolitical, but a concerted effort to uphold the politics of racism.

Students deserve to know the real history of the country, not to live in a fantasy that excuses and compounds the violent systems of racism. CRT does not advocate, as many critics suggest, traumatizing white children with the exploits of their ancestors, but is developmentally appropriate. In all other curricula, educators are able to ensure students can learn complex topics based on their age and readiness. Besides, youths

have great empathy and capacity for understanding injustice. While we must protect youths, they do not need protection from knowing racism exists. In fact, erasing racism can inflict more trauma on BIPOC students whose lived experiences are dismissed and whose peers are not taught how to treat them with kindness and understanding. CRT gives youth the ability to critically think about systems of power and will empower them to analyze how they may be acting based on racism, thus giving them the opportunity to change behavior harmful to their peers of color.

CRT should not only be allowed in schools but required. If we are to be fully prepared for the world, we must know how racism shaped the systems of power

that inform that world. Students who only learn the white supremacist versions of our history (and present) are not only unprepared for the world, but to be good community members in an inequitable, racist society. Anti-racism

must be at the forefront of our education as it is the only way to ensure the violent mistakes of our past and present are not made again. White students have a responsibility to support, uplift, and center our BIPOC peers. Banning us from doing so harms us all.



# IS SNL STILL FUNNY?

By: Amy Qiao

According to at least one random YouTube comment on every single SNL video, no, SNL has not been funny since 1400 BC. Moreover, many of those that claim SNL isn't funny usually emphasize that SNL used to be funny. So if critics are answering the question by comparing the show to the past, maybe we should change our question to: is SNL as funny as it was before?

Most likely, yes. SNL has delivered so many uniquely hilarious sketches, with various brilliant comedians leading the way. And there are plenty of reasons to explain its harsh criticism. First, the show's cast has changed a lot, and transitions between new members can lead to a few awkward moments. Also, the standard that we hold SNL to has changed immensely, and a lot of that is due to the internet. As Drew Gooden, founder and CEO of PictureOfHotDog.com, explains, "in 1992, if there was a terrible, unfunny sketch... people forgot about it the next day." He elaborates, "Nowadays it takes five minutes for a sketch to get ripped onto Twitter and quote retweeted into oblivion. Every failure that happens on the show will get torn to shreds." The internet has the power for bad sketches to go viral while good ones don't get as much attention. When we think about SNL in the past, we usually look at the highlights, while the most questionable sketches of SNL today are the ones that get pushed into the spotlight.

Another important question to ask is, does it matter if SNL is still funny? This doesn't answer the question but might bring up a good point. If people still enjoy some parts of the show, then maybe SNL is still doing their job. Not every sketch has to be a hit; that never happened before, and it still doesn't happen now. But if we can all find a part of the show that we like, whether it be Kate McKinnon, Weekend Update, or Kate McKinnon (did I repeat one?), then maybe we can appreciate that one part of the show and stop hating on the other parts. Finally, please, please, stop commenting that SNL isn't funny on every single video.

# JUST BECAUSE EVERYONE ELSE IS GOING OUT DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO

By: Amy Qiao

Already from the title, you can tell I'm really fun to be around. And I'm obviously ecstatic about the looming presence of expectations to go outside again. But many people are not, and this article is for them. Just them. Definitely not me.

First off, it's okay to feel uncomfortable about going out; you're not weird. There are so many things to feel nervous about, whether it's health concerns, social interactions, or the off-set chance you'll accidentally say "you too" when the waiter says "enjoy your food." (Clearly not speaking from experience.) All of these emotions are completely valid, and they can definitely make you feel anxious if you feel pressured to go out. The decision to go out is completely yours, and no one can make that decision for you. But even amidst these feelings, you might still want to see your friends or go to that concert, and those uncomfortable emotions might be stopping you. There's a confusing cloud of emotions raining over everyone's head right now, but hopefully, the advice below will help you navigate your comfort zone as we adjust to a reopening world:

Do what feels right to protect your health: If you're uncomfortable about taking off your mask, then keep it on. If you prefer to wait an extra minute for the next elevator to ride alone, then do that. Do what feels right to you to protect the health of yourself and others.

Make sure you're going out for yourself: If you're a bit hesitant about going out, ask yourself: "am I doing this because everyone else seems to be going out again, or because I truly want to?"

Pay attention to what makes you comfortable and uncomfortable: Maybe grocery shopping and going to the park feel fun for you, but large crowds and restaurants don't. If you figure out what does and doesn't make you comfortable, you can still enjoy going out without stepping out of your comfort zone.

Remember to listen to yourself and always prioritize your and others' health.

