

Musical Spells Success for Drama Dept.

By MEGAN PAN (III)

Opening night was a great success for the cast and crew of "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee," which debuted on Thursday, February 26 in Macrae Theatre. Directed by Drama teacher Mrs. Stephanie Romankow, this adaptation of the popular musical comedy added an ensemble of 22 students to the nine major roles, leaving the production with a combined cast and crew of over 40 students.

Each show also featured four different audience volunteers who participated as spellers, which made no two performances exactly alike.

The story looks into the lives of six spellers participating in the county spelling bee. Although the participants all appear ordinary and unassuming at first, their personal struggles and "misfit statuses" are revealed as the show progresses.

Charlito "Chip" Tolentino, played by James Robertson (IV), is the champion of the 24th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee and returns to defend his title. After puberty hits at an inopportune moment, he laments how his "unfortunate distraction" has ruined his chances of winning.

Despite his womanizing personality, Chip fails to attract the attention of any of his competitors, including Marcy Park, played by Sonali Mehta (V), an ac-

complished over-achiever tired of winning.

Alternatively, Leaf Coneybear, played by Jessie McLaughlin (IV), is an eccentric and energetic homeschooler who is determined to prove to her family and to herself that she is smarter

father, played by senior Taylor Dillon, works late.

The moderator of the bee is Rona Lisa Peretti, played by Jazmin Palmer (V), who is also a former Putnam County Spelling Bee Champion.

For the seniors, "Spelling

"I learned so much about myself playing Logainne and I have enjoyed building her character, pulling from my personal experiences to reveal the many complex layers of her personality to the audience," Friend said.

Seniors Fred Chang and Taylor Dillon also had important roles, playing Vice Principal Douglas Panch and the comfort counselor Mitch Mahoney, respectively. Sarah Beckmen (IV), Sean Fischer (VI) and Coby Harris (IV) also had roles in the ensemble, and Ricky Morash (VI) played Jesus.

Other noteworthy seniors whose work was reflected behind the scenes

included stage managers Victoria Castillo and Bridget Harrison, techies Nate Ballintyn and Tommy San Miguel, and pit band member David Rockoff.

Audiences agreed that the talent and dedication of all involved in the production of the musical led to a polished, professional and highly enjoyable performance.



The cast performs "Pandemonium"

than everyone believes.

William Morris Barfée, played by TanTan Wang (V), has a unique "Magic Foot" method of spelling and a touchy personality that eventually softens when he becomes enamored with competitor Olive Ostrovsky, played by Ellie Harrison (IV). Olive's mother, played by junior Erin Dugan, is in an ashram in India and her

Bee" is their final musical at Pingry. Julia Friend (VI) played Logainne "Schwarzy" Schwartz and Grubenierre, the youngest and most politically aware of the spellers. Logainne is the daughter of two overbearing gay fathers, Carl Grubenierre, played by junior Paul Cooper, and Dan Schwartz, played by junior Justin Wang.

I. Zinn (VI) and Bridget Harrison, techies Nate Ballintyn and Tommy San Miguel, and pit band member David Rockoff.

Audiences agreed that the talent and dedication of all involved in the production of the musical led to a polished, professional and highly enjoyable performance.

Credit Union Provides Real-Life Experience

By JOSH BAUM (IV)

Over the past three years, Pingry students and staff have worked diligently to create an official Credit Union. The students, comprised of seniors, juniors, and sophomores, are advised by Chief Financial Officer Mr. Olaf Weckesser and Financial Literacy teacher Mr. George Sullivan. Together, they have met with government officials and attended events such as Pingry on Wall Street to promote the initiative.

The Pingry Credit Union received a fifty thousand dollar grant from the Edward E. Ford Foundation contingent on receiving an additional fifty thousand dollars from Pingry fundraising, which was achieved last December. Now, only a few steps still remain in the path to certification via the National Credit Union

accounts for up to \$250,000.

The Pingry Credit Union will be a great place to deposit money for students, parents, faculty, and alumni alike. The Pingry Credit Union will offer a special credit-building program that should be of significant interest to the student body. Instead of building up a quality credit score through credit cards and other means, the Pingry Credit Union will supply an easy, hassle-free alternative. A one-time deposit in the credit-builder program will get a member well on his or her way to a desirable credit score. To address educational benefits, student involvement will be paramount in the Credit Union's day-to-day functionality. For example, the marketing team will be looking for avenues to increase involvement among Pingry alumni, and the finance team will handle



J. Chartouni (VI) at the Pingry on Wall Street Event

F. Chang (VI)

Administration.

The Pingry Credit Union has two main goals: to create a financially stable institution that works for the benefit of the Pingry community and to provide a one-of-a-kind educational opportunity for Pingry students.

The Pingry Credit Union will act similarly to a bank; however, it will pose one significant advantage over a bank. Because credit unions are not-for-profit, the Pingry Credit Union will offer more competitive interest rates than a bank. Furthermore, the National Credit Union Administration will insure Pingry Credit Union

investments and bookkeeping. Freshmen and sophomores will be apprentices in these roles and climb up through the ranks as they gain experience. Upperclassmen will have a chance to thrive in leadership positions that entail real world tasks and responsibility. Opportunities working in the Pingry Credit Union will be unparalleled and invaluable.

The Pingry Credit Union has recently launched its new website (<http://pingrycreditunion.org/>) and a survey to gauge community interest. Look out for more news regarding the Pingry Credit Union.

ism is a conscious choice while racial insensitivity involves treating racial issues with carelessness. Racial insensitivity, she argued, typically takes the form of self-segregation and stereotypes. Offering examples of insensitivity that she has seen, she argued that solutions might be achieved diversifying one's network of friends and noticing those who do not adhere to racial

stereotypes. Coyne, who was a finalist in last year's competition, explained why she decided to compete again. "After I competed last year," she said, "I thought that it was a terrifying experience but it was also really exhilarating at the same time. I thought that there was a little bit that was kind of left unsaid after last year."



Lebow winner Katie Coyne (V) and runner-up Henry Kraham (IV)

Courtesy Pingry Communications

LeBow Competition Showcases Student Oratory

By TRACY COOPER (IV)

Students, faculty and guests gathered in Hauser Auditorium on Friday, February 20 for the final round of the annual Robert H. LeBow '58 Memorial Oratorical Competition. Finalists Wesley Streicher (IV), Gabe Gever (IV), Katie Coyne (V), Zayna Nassoura (V), Akshina Gupta (IV) and Henry Kraham (IV) all presented original speeches. More than 30 juniors and sophomores competed in the preliminary round of the competition.

In her winning oration, "To the People of Pingry," Coyne argued that Pingry students and others should focus on their own inherent worth, rather than basing their self-confidence on their achievements. Coyne pointed out that many students dehumanize themselves by reducing themselves to their own accomplishments and discussed situations in which her friends have done this. She said, "You're a human being. That's worth something by itself."

Kraham, the runner-up in the competition, focused on the idea of privilege, advising people to listen to those around them to understand their experiences. In his speech, "To Challenge Comfort," he pointed out the importance of paying attention to the experiences of those of dif-

ferent backgrounds from one's own. Promoting an understanding between people, he said, "We live in a bubble of harmony and similarity. We are sheltered by the comfort of concurrence."

Streicher's speech, titled "What's Your Focus?" stressed the importance of selflessness and the need to consider others rather than exclusively oneself. Recognizing examples of selfishness in history and in daily life, such as the common practice of sending selfies, she envisioned a world without selfishness.

Gever argued in his speech, "The Ultimate Frenemy," that we examine our reliance on technology in the United States. Drawing from his own experiences of breaking his phone, as well as attending a school in Switzerland where students used minimal technology, he pointed out that decreased technology use may improve one's satisfaction in life.

Nassoura's speech, "Independent Thinker," discussed the concept of independence, asserting that although individuals depend on those around them, one can still be independent as a result of free thinking.

In, "Content of our Hearts," Gupta pointed out the differences between racism and racial insensitivity, explaining that rac-



Students discuss the issue of offensive language and potential solutions to the problem in Community Forums split by grade level. P. 6

Inside The Diversity Issue

Enforcing Our Opinions

Seniors Nicole Mo and Kyle Boylan discuss the importance of embracing multiple opinions and enhancing the classroom experience. P. 3

High School Credit Union

The Pingry Credit Union will debut later this year, and offers many advantages to students, faculty, and alumni. P. 5

Creative Writing Festival

The Upper School celebrated the annual Justin Society Creative Writing Festival in February with renowned writers and poets. P. 7

Diversity Survey

The Record survey about diversity (first conducted in 2005) produced many thought-provoking results that also show a shift in attitudes over time. P. 10

Winter Sports

Numerous Winter Sports garnered many titles as the season wound to a close. P. 11-12

Sections

School News.....	1,5-8
Commentary.....	2-4
Puzzles.....	9
Survey.....	10
Sports.....	11-12

EDITORIAL

Multiple Opinions Stimulate Innovation

In 2013, the consulting company Deloitte conducted a study to determine the future of diversity in education and the workplace. In the final report, the authors acknowledged that up to this point, diversity has been solely focused on race, gender, and ethnicity. However, it may be time to start considering the one kind of diversity that contributes to progress and innovation. The diversity of thought, dubbed the “future of diversity” by the study’s authors, is one kind of diversity that not only promotes an engaging environment for learning and production, but also proves to treat everyone based on their merits instead of uncontrollable genetic factors.

In both the professional and educational world, the issue of diversity is becoming a hot-button issue, due to the unintended consequences of various policies. Policies like affirmative action that deal with race and gender, for example, were designed to promote the hiring of underrepresented minorities. However, they have become construed as a form of “reverse discrimination,” in that certain groups are discriminated against. Although numerous scientists have argued that a having a variety of races and genders in the workplace or classroom is beneficial, I would argue that this result stems from unique thought-processes, not differences in race or gender.

For example, if we have a group of individuals of different races and genders to work on a project, is it guaranteed that these individuals will produce better results than a group with only one race or one gender? Not necessarily, since it makes no difference what race or gender people are if everyone thinks the same way. If the members of the group with different races and genders have the same ideas, what is the added benefit of the diversity? It might be more beneficial to go with a group of people of the same race or gender if they all have unique perspectives.

One of the hallmark findings of the Deloitte study is that the environment most conducive to progress is one in which everyone in the group views a problem in a different way. This approach leads to innovative solutions and hinders “groupthink,” which occurs when a group focuses on conforming to one solution instead of entertaining different ones. Instead of focusing on creating an environment where all races and genders are represented equally, wouldn’t it make more sense to create an environment where different opinions and perspectives are represented?

In order to accomplish this goal, employers and schools can use a variety of different methods. One, which is advocated by the Deloitte study, eliminates the use of standard, uninformative questions that do not reveal anything about a candidate’s cognitive abilities. Instead, it would be better to use questions that require thinking, like presenting a problem and asking the candidate for his/her assessment or solution, in order to accurately gauge the candidate’s unique perspectives. With this approach, employers would be able to achieve a cognitively diverse workplace with the most talented people and come up with revolutionary solutions to problems.

Another, more controversial but effective approach, is to eliminate the consideration of race, gender, and ethnicity in the hiring/admission process. Instead, decisions should be based on merit, ability, and the uniqueness each candidate brings to the table. Instead of trying to achieve the perfect balance of races and genders in the workplace or school, doesn’t it make more sense to achieve a balance of different thoughts, ideas, and opinions? Is it better to have a racially diverse department or company that analyzes the same issue the same way, or a group that is not as diverse based on gender or race but harbors talented people and innovative opinions?

The issue of diversity will continue to remain sensitive and controversial if people stick to the idea of identifying and categorizing everyone by race or gender. Trying to create a microcosm based on inherited traits does not create a more enhanced environment if everyone thinks the same way. Instead, we as a society should focus on creating more cognitively diverse environments, where multiple unique perspectives can generate innovative solutions. In the long run, it really doesn’t matter what your skin color is or what gender you identify with. What matters is how you apply your mind to push the envelope of ingenuity.

—Ahiram Karuppur

What “The Imitation Game” Teaches Us

By CAROLINE TERENS (V)

Having differences from those around you, whether those be race, religion, sexual orientation or opinions, can be the most difficult challenge to overcome, even for the most brilliant and accomplished people.

After recently seeing “The Imitation Game” and learning about the life of Alan Turing for the first time, I became enthralled by his story. Alan Turing was a British mathematician who worked for the Government Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park and also pursued his own work as a student at King’s College in Cambridge. His work in computer science and cryptology revolutionized the technological world and ultimately won World War II for the Allies.

However, during his lifetime, his brilliance could have been immediately undermined by his difference, which was his homosexuality. In the mid-1900’s, acts of homosexuality were punishable by law. After being accused of “gross indecency,” Alan Turing had the choice between prison or chemical castration. He chose hormonal treatment because it allowed him to continue his work in his home.

It is estimated that Alan Turing’s work shortened the war by two to three years which in turn saved the lives of 14 to 21 million people. While today we consider him a war hero and a genius, the discrimination during his lifetime made him feel continuously threatened and ultimately led to his death.



Courtesy Google Images

Alan Turing died in 1954 at age 41 due to cyanide poisoning. Although there was no definite cause of his death, many believe that he committed suicide because of the deteriorating effects of the chemical castration, a punishment for his homosexuality.

The twentieth century was a time when people could not accept differences and live harmoniously. Millions of lives were lost in wars and genocides that revolved around the diversity of race, religion, and opinion.

I distinctly remember one scene in the movie in which the police interrogates Alan Turing for his secretive work and “gross indecency.” He begins to describe the “Imitation Game,” an aspect of his life’s work, which Rex Reed describes in an article from the Observer. He writes, “The title is from a paper he wrote analyzing the differences be-

tween men and machines. There are times in the movie when he seems one and the same.” Turing believes that although people and machines are thinking differently, they are both still thinking. He also comments on the differences of people and how inherently diverse interests and beliefs cause humans to think differently from each other. While they may be thinking differently, one person’s ideology is no better than the other’s.

Reed explains that his homosexuality is not the only thing that made Turing different from his peers: “He was just as unpopular with his fellow eggheads as he had been at Cambridge—agnostic, apolitical, withdrawn and obnoxiously arrogant, with a sense of entitlement that infuriated his peers.” His homosexuality may have been a cause of his introverted personality, because he already

felt distant from those around him because he knew that they would not accept him for who he truly was. His revolutionary work should have been enough for people to acknowledge him and respect him but because of his personality and his homosexuality, he never received the respect he deserved for saving millions of lives and advancing the technological world.

Turing is just one of many brilliant people who, because of their differences, are unable to reach their full potential because of their environment.

In our lives at Pingry, we should not be afraid of our differences or let them keep us from pursuing our goals. We should learn to understand and appreciate Pingry’s diversity and use it to make us more aware of the world and to promote acceptance of others.

Girls Need to Speak Up

By KATIE HO (IV)

Upon entering school one day, I headed to first period history class with a rather determined look on my face, my heart slightly beating with anticipation. I decided right then and there that today, I was going to be completely engaged in my Harkness-style class.

I could visualize it all in my head: my eyes darting around the classroom ready to interject a point, my mouth confidently moving up and down, my voice loud and clear. I slowly took a seat at the round, daunting table. Of all the wooden and plastic tables that I had a keen liking for at Pingry, I had not yet grown accustomed to this table.

During class, scrawled notes filled my spiral binder as I listened to my teacher direct our lesson. Very soon, a few boys started chiming into the conversation,

each stating their opinions and then expressing their discordant ideas. The rest of the class shuffled around in their chairs, their eyes watchfully following the conversation back and forth. None of the listeners uttered a word. The class was attentive, but no one, including a majority of the girls, felt like adding their own ideas into the heated conversation.

Recently, I came to the conclusion that male students are primarily dominating my history class while many female students are listening attentively rather than speaking. It’s not as though girls don’t understand the reading material the same way boys do. In fact, a majority of the girls in my class come to class more than prepared. Many are constantly highlighting their textbooks with an array of colors and jotting down detailed notes in their notebooks and in the margins of their textbooks. However, the boys in my class seem to dominate the classroom dynamic, which often makes the girls feel less confident and even intimidated when it comes to participating in class.

Though I certainly feel an imbalance in gender with certain classes, I think that the class dynamic often depends on what types of students are in each class. For example, in my English class, girls and boys speak the same amount. Conversation will rapidly flow back and forth across the room, but between both girls and boys. Girls are more than willing to question their male counterparts, and boys do not hesitate to defend their answer and retort back.

This comparison between my History and English classes made me question why different



E. Jin (V)

classes naturally foster different learning environments. When a visitor visits the cafeteria with hungry swarms of students on taco day, he or she will undeniably see a diverse community packed together in one big room. The visitor would immediately be able to spot differences in gender, race, ethnicity and age. He or she might be thoroughly impressed with the range of different people.

However, just because our school is diverse, that doesn’t necessarily mean that people of different genders, races, ethnicities and ages are comfortable and willing to mingle. During lunch, I can often see girls sitting at one big table, chatting furiously, while boys are sitting at another, eating voraciously. Likewise, in my history class, boys seem to be dominating the classroom discussions, while the girls are avid listeners.

Even though students are surrounded by a diverse community, those with similar traditions, values, and backgrounds will automatically drift closer together, which often creates barriers among different types of people. Various students react to

situations very differently, and students should grow more aware of their diverse peers at lunch and even more so during classes. It is imperative that students learn to mingle with peers that share different values and ethnic backgrounds now, so they can step outside of their protective bubble and value who other people are.

So, the next time I happen to have history class, my experience at the round, wooden table is going to be just like how I imagined it. Instead of just being an attentive listener, I plan to express my ideas more forcefully and make eye contact with both boys and girls during discussion.

Though speaking up may be challenging at first, I am determined to take one step closer to making my edifying class even more productive by creating a bigger balance in gender. If more girls start talking, they will feel on an equal footing with their male counterparts. I can still see it clearly: my mouth will be slightly open, ready to pounce on the next opportunity to state my own opinion, my clear, confident voice flooding the classroom.



The Pingry Record

VOLUME CXLII
NUMBER 4

Layout Editors

Julia Masch
Abigail Ren

Copy Editor

Dillon Noone
Caroline Terens

Editors-in-Chief

Ahiram Karuppur
Lori Kim

Assistant Editors

Abby Bauer
Haley Park
Mark Shtrakhman

Photo Editor

Isabella Zinn

Assistant Photo Editor

Haley Park

Faculty Advisor

Dr. Susan Dineen

Stop Dumping on Conservatives

By NICOLE MO(VI)

In second grade, I decided I was a Republican. Considering my parents' lack of interest in politics, I have no idea what compelled me to support Bush in the election that year, but it was the first and last time that I had any right-wing affiliations. As I grew older and started basing my political decisions on more than who had the better smile (sorry, Kerry), I realized that I tend to lean left. When it comes to social issues, I'm even what some might consider a "raging liberal" (their words, not mine). I say this now to put my following statements into perspective—consider it a disclaimer.

Pingry is, by all accounts, a politically aware and active school. Organizations like the Political Analysis and Debate Club and activities such as community forums spark discussions and encourage the community to be involved. At this kind of private prep school, there's bound to be political disparity. Students and faculty come from different towns, families and socioeconomic backgrounds. We've cultivated a hotbed for political debate where zealous conservatives and liberals alike will defend their views to the bitter end. And quite often, the end is indeed very bitter.

It's not hard to see that the majority of mainstream media has boiled politics down to polemic arguments. Flip on Fox News or MSNBC and, depending on your own beliefs, you'll either turn up the volume or throw the remote at

the screen. Maybe it's pandering to the public or perhaps simply what news has come to, but political debates usually

conservatives as self-interested and close-minded. Conservative students and faculty are often accused of "opposing"

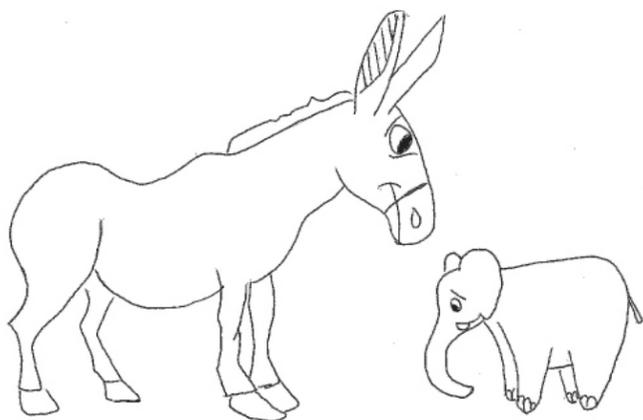
personal. Maybe it's just me, but I'm pretty sure that "Racist Sociopath" stings a little more than "Hippie Socialist," no matter your political affiliations. We have allowed the conservative agenda to be defined by a radical extremism that only represents a miniscule portion of the population.

Once again, this is a malady suffered by both sides and not by everybody, but my experience suggests that many of us more liberal students establish and envision the character flaws and personal prejudices of our opponents before an argument even begins.

By issuing these automatic judgments, we've stereotyped an entire subset of people into antagonistic caricatures who suit our own needs and justify our opinions. It's reactionary, self-victimizing, self-preservational, and completely understandable; it's much easier to ignore criticisms of our own opinions when we believe they come from an inferior and immoral opponent.

Bipartisanship, neutrality, and moderation are all heavily promoted as the intelligent path to take, and most Pingry students that I've interacted with, aware of the positive connotations of objectivity, neither identify as members of the Tea Party nor the Socialist Workers Party. Most claim a middle ground and are wary of any extremist labels, understanding that "the middle" is home to the wisely rational.

Yet, the binarization of politics has made it increasingly difficult to actually transcend judgment, as we are too busy establishing enemy lines to acknowledge that our frustrating, illogical and radical opponent just might be in the middle, too.



I. Zinn (VI)

turn into ad hominem diatribes before any actual discussion is achieved.

What I've noticed on the news and in the classroom is that liberals are seemingly allowed a certain edge in their arguments. Pingry values honor, promotes selflessness, and encourages compassion; it's also an academic environment that values progress. Modern liberalism often falls in line with the goals and ideals of progressivism, and I've found (through personal experience, I'll admit) that this trend gives liberals a sense of self-righteousness.

It's easy for most liberals—and especially for liberal teenagers—to peer down from a moral pedestal and dismiss

universally accepted morals and are too easily cornered into playing the role of Big Bad. One wrong word, the slightest hint of a microaggression, and the student with a potentially thought-provoking argument becomes a selfish bigot who has no grasp of "the real world." I would know—I'm often at fault for painting my peers into this role when they quite often don't deserve it.

Don't get me wrong, I'm sure that these tactics are utilized ubiquitously, but it seems to me that liberals have mastered the art. Sure, unpleasant nicknames can be and often are thrown at the left, but the barbs at conservatives always seem sharper and more

Can We Express Unpopular Opinions?

By KYLE BOYLAN (VI)

We live in a world filled with opinions, seemingly right ones and wrong ones, liberal ones and conservative ones, extreme ones and reserved ones. From a young age, we are encouraged to develop an opinion by other people with opinions, a rather confounding paradox.

At an early and impressionable point in life, it is difficult to distinguish right from wrong and who you should look to for advice on complex things, such as politics and international issues, or simple issues, such as which soft drink tastes best or which clothing store is the most fashionable.

Children's opinions are shaped by the older and supposedly admirable authority figures in their lives, including parents, older siblings, relatives, family friends and teachers.

An opinion is a funny thing. We are all encouraged to have our own expressive stance on issues as small as Coke versus Pepsi or as large as who is to blame for the Iraq War.

However, once you encounter someone who disagrees with you, the issue becomes contentious and causes awkward friction between both parties.

In some cases, this friction can form between teachers and students.

For example, I have found it awkward at times to say whether or not I enjoyed my teacher's favorite book, or to disagree with his or her stance on current events.

This isn't to say that all teachers don't tolerate or discourage divergence of opinion.

But some teachers and administrators appear intolerant of different opinions and ideas from other community members.

One example is the community reaction to the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. When I attended the community forum on that subject, I remained silent and left frustrated because I thought most people were saying the same thing.

Had I chosen to state a divergent opinion at the forum, I feared I would have been shut down or looked at differently by teachers, and that shouldn't be okay.

While it is acceptable

to hold your own opinions near and dear as a teacher or administrator, I consider it inappropriate for teachers to broadcast their preferences for one side, and make those students who have opposing opinions feel uneasy in class or in the community.

As I see it, the faculty has the responsibility of representing and presenting multiple opinions.

Though the faculty might not agree with one side, it is the job of an educator to present different sides, encourage individual opinion, and support students regardless of what opinions they hold.

I believe in and know how much Pingry values the importance of ethnic diversity among the faculty, but I am not so sure that diversity of taste or opinion among faculty is of equal importance.

Faculty clearly make an impression on all of us as students, so I feel that it is absolutely their responsibility to convey balance and respect for all points of view.

Focusing on one opinion and not its opposite makes it seem as if the school doesn't care about the individuals in the community who do not

share an identical opinion.

Different opinions exist all over the world, and even though Pingry is a small piece of the world, different opinions are definitely in existence at our school. It should be the responsibilities of both students and teachers to care about and value all perspectives on politics as much as the literary value of the protagonist in a novel we are reading in class.

EDITORIAL

When We Make a Big Deal Out of a Small Problem

"Where are you from?" As an Asian American, it's a question I get asked often. And to some people's surprise, it's one to which I don't take much offense.

"Microaggressions," like the question "Where are you from?" have recently been receiving a lot of attention. Scroll through any popular current events website like BuzzFeed or Vice, and you will find some type of article titled, "I, Too, Am Harvard" or "21 Racial Microaggressions You Hear on a Daily Basis."

The term "microaggression" was coined by Harvard professor Chester Pierce in the '70s to describe insults and dismissals that he said he had seen non-black Americans inflict on black people. Today, it usually refers to the unintended discrimination toward any marginalized group and includes sayings like, "America is a melting pot" or "I'm not homophobic; I have gay friends."

While I believe that stereotyping, when demeaning and chastising, is never okay, I often find the fuss over microaggressions slightly petty. It almost seems as though anything can be considered a microaggression, as anyone could find anything offensive—I know that might sound like a stretch, but it's truly a matter of perception. As I read these BuzzFeed and Vice articles that point out the microaggressions prevalent in our own dialogue, I cringe at the ones that are rudely phrased and visibly offensive, but there also others that seem like honest statements or questions that stem less from ignorance and more from curiosity.

When I say that I'm not offended by the question, "Where are you from," I'm not speaking on behalf of all minorities who may receive a similar question—I'm simply speaking from my personal experience. I even understand why some might find the question offensive, as it comes with some assumption that I'm not "originally" from America. But to be honest, I think it's a perfectly valid question: I, like many of my Asian peers, am the child of immigrants, and it shouldn't be surprising that my identity as an American doesn't extend multiple generations. While the question may sometimes be phrased ignorantly, it's one that stems from curiosity: this person wants to know more about me.

My main problem with this fuss over microaggressions, and a larger generational concern over political correctness, is that it stifles free expression. President Obama seemed to allude to political correctness at the National Prayer Breakfast in February when he addressed the freedom of speech and freedom of religion. He said, in "modern, complicated, diverse societies," Americans must "exercise civility and restraint and judgment" in order to protect these freedoms.

This sentiment was a little disturbing to me, especially only a month after the Charlie Hebdo massacre, when the democratic world seemed to rally behind free speech. Our own country was built upon, essentially, the freedom to voice our opinions. But nowadays, it seems as though our daily interactions are stifled by a fear of offending others, even in the slightest of ways. We ferret out any evidence of racism and sexism, suggesting the use of one conjunction over another.

Accepting those who are different from us first requires understanding others, which foremost requires learning about others. We're still a young nation with people of all shapes, sizes, identities, etc.—in a sense, we're still getting to know each other. Perhaps in an ideal world, we would be able to immediately understand and accept those who are unlike us. But we can't expect to be accepting and accepted without at first asking and learning, which will inevitably include some bumps along the way.

Focusing on microaggressions isn't the solution to fixing real aggressions. Rather, the solution lies in learning about, and thus accepting, others. Only when we allow people to speak freely about social identifiers such as race and gender can we truly start the process of acceptance.

Open up the dialogue; don't avoid it.

—Lori Kim



Take Courses You Enjoy

By MARK SHTRAKHMAN (V)

Let's talk about diversity. But not in terms of race or gender or any label like that. Let's talk about diversity in your class choices. It is something that you don't worry about until you reach the second half of high school, particularly February of your junior year.

Suddenly, it's a puzzle of fitting as many AP and Honors classes into six or, if you're ambitious, seven slots of your senior year schedule. As students start gearing up for the college process, they become worried about what colleges will expect of them. Should you take an AP History course, even though you're not a fan of the humanities? Should you add in AP Biology or AP Chemistry, although you really have no intention of pursuing a career in the field of science? To make matters worse,

it seems as though everyone has an opinion on the classes you should take.

In reality, it should be something that you decide in collaboration with

AP options, while others are beginning to shift away from that model of learning.



S. Wang (VI)

One of your peers tells you that, according to his older brother, you absolutely need to take this one class to have a mere shot at getting into a certain college.

your college counselor and teachers. You shouldn't feel pressured or be bullied into taking any class.

Some academic departments have never offered

I agree with the English department's choice not to offer AP courses. Instead of worrying about an exam in May, students spend their junior and senior years ex-

ploring a wide range of literature with minimal stress.

The fall of junior year is spent analyzing a few major books in American Literature, and senior year begins with European and British Literature or World Literature.

In the spring, upperclassmen have the opportunity to choose from a variety of English courses based on their interests. Students can debate ethics and morality in Ethical Dilemma, question philosophy in the eponymously named course, explore up-and-coming authors in New Voices, and pursue so many other options.

In the foreign language department, some language courses have given up the Advanced Placement label in favor of Advanced Topics (usually with levels I and II). French and German have already made the switch with others expected

to do so in the next couple years. The lack of pressure allows teachers to personally choose what material they want to share with their students. If there's an intriguing and thought-provoking tangent to go off on, they can do just that.

Students should consider giving themselves a similar option in their own courses. Obviously, the classes you take while you are an upperclassman are important—as anyone who has ever gone through the college process can attest.

Yet maybe you should leave one slot for something you're genuinely passionate about, or perhaps something you want to explore for the first time. While you may have been focused on fulfilling some of your requirements earlier on in high school, you should use your final two years to balance a challenging and exciting course load.

Remember to Respect the Opinions of Others

By HALEY PARK (V)

When was the last time you were critical of an opinion that was different from yours? Was it in your last history class? Was it in a community forum? Wherever and whatever it may be, I've been noticing that people tend to be predisposed to criticizing opinions that are different from their own. But is this what "diversity of thought" means?

At a school where diversity is encouraged, I often wonder why people get frustrated and even turned off when people state a position that goes against their own.

Recently I stumbled across an article in *Business Insider* titled "Why 'Thought Diversity' Is the Future of the Workplace." Alison Griswold, the author of the article, said that by cultivating diversity of thought, "companies can stimulate creativity, spur insight, and increase efficiency." Although Griswold's argument refers to life at the workplace, I quickly thought of how it could apply to Pingry as well.

If we make a conscious effort to respect the opinions of others, we too, can create a community that is similar to the ideal workplace Griswold envisions.

Within our school community, it is clear that everyone has their own opinions and thoughts. But not everyone is always willing to accept those of their peers. I must admit: I am also guilty of this. Yet, I think if people were to be more



H. Conti (VI)

open-minded when hearing the opinions of others, we would have a school community that is more accepting, positive, and maybe even more creative.

When people have different opinions from ours, we have a natural tendency to shut out their point of view and automatically believe that our way of thinking is "correct." However, in situations like these, it's important to take a step back and consider the other person's stance.

In a recent community forum, I imagine some people were upset because their opinions were "shut out" by others in the room. While I understand what these people may be feeling, I think it's completely natural and appropriate for them to share their opinions, even if they go against what another person is saying. We can learn from others through debate.

However, it is not okay when the person who is disagreeing makes himself or herself feel superior in comparison to the other person, simply because of the opinion he or she holds.

I think it's great that there are wide ranges of opinions at Pingry, but people should not disregard the opinions of others, solely because they are different from their own.

"Diversity of thought" is meant to bring forth the opinions of many people. It is inevitable that an individual's cultural or racial background, socio-economic status and life experiences will shape their ideas and thoughts.

Many times when a person shuts out the opinions of others without sufficient consideration, the result is students who are afraid to speak up and a classroom or assembly that is not thought provoking.

It's essential to remember that when you're sharing your opinions with others, you don't regard yourself or your ideas as superior. This isn't what "diversity of thought" is meant to do. Rather, its purpose is to create a mix of types of thinkers with "different cultures, backgrounds, and personalities." As Griswold said, the purpose of "diversity of thought" is to bring about differences in thinking among people, but in a respectful way.

It's great that at a school like Pingry, we are all able and, even encouraged, to share our thoughts openly. But to continue doing so and to create a community that is embracing and open to our fellow peers and faculty, we must take into consideration the way we share our thoughts. We must consider whether or not we are being condescending to the other person whose thoughts and opinions differ from ours. The way we share our thoughts can affect people's feelings and inhibit the sharing of ideas.

If we want to continue to promote "diversity of thought" within our community, then we must share our own opinions without a patronizing and superior attitude. Let's all make it a goal to be respectful of diverse thoughts.

Word in the Hall: If You Could Publish a Book, What Would It Be About?



WILL JOHNSON (VI)

"A thriller about someone who gets into an accident and wakes up from amnesia and has to put everything in his past life back together. And then he realizes that he's a serial killer."



MARIA WERNER AND
JACQUIE JAKIMOWICZ
(V)

"Ourselves"



MR. KEATING

"I would write a book about an experience I haven't had yet: Coming of Age."



FRANCES STEELE (VI)

"Something depressing and confusing yet fascinating, like eco-terrorism or cults."



URSULA DEDEKIND (V)

"I'd write a cookbook!"

Hanly Lecture Honors Welles Remy Crowther

By ALLY PYNE (III)

Chair of the Honor Board Max Leef (VI) introduced Alison Crowther to the members of the Basking Ridge community for the annual Hanly Lecture on Ethics and Morality on Wednesday, February 18. Mrs. Crowther told students, faculty and teachers the story of her son, Welles Remy Crowther. Welles was a 9/11 civilian hero who saved a dozen lives.

Welles grew up playing lacrosse and hockey and volunteering at the Nyack, New York Fire Department. According to his mother, Welles demonstrated the values of courage, bravery and teamwork throughout his life. Welles went on to play Division I lacrosse at Boston College. Welles kept one thing consistent: he always wore a signature red bandana.

On September 11, Welles was working on Wall Street in the World Trade Center. When the plane hit, he sprang to action, leading a group of sur-

to run back up the steps was exactly what they expected Welles to do.

Gabby Obregon (IV) said, "The video gave me chills and I was overcome with such sadness."

"I have so much respect and admiration for Welles' character," she adding, and hopes "that his legacy and heroic message lives on and is spread throughout the world."

TanTan Wang (V) agreed. "To have Mrs. Crowther come and share one of these stories about a hero that was so close to her truly grounded the story," he said. "It made me feel a connection to something I could only have imagined if I'd read about it."

Mrs. Crowther then introduced her business partner, Vernoy Paolini, who delivered a detailed explanation of the origins, workings and goals of their organization, The Red Bandana Project. The project is a developed curriculum used in schools K-12 that focuses on



Mrs. Alison Crowther delivers the Hanly lecture to Upper and Middle School students. Courtesy Pingry Communications

vivors down the only safe stairwell to a group of firefighters. Instead of joining the group, Welles turned around, climbed up the stairwell that he had just come down, and rescued more survivors.

Students first watched a video detailing Welles's story and his parents' reaction to the news of his death and 9/11 itself. They heard Mrs. Crowther explain how she learned of the way Welles' spent the final hour of his life. Mrs. Crowther said numerous times that neither she nor her husband was surprised to hear of his bravery. They both said that turning around

the characteristics that Welles embodied: leadership, compassion and forgiveness.

Later in her talk, Ms. Paolini shared a story captured in a book titled "14 Cows for America" by Carmen Agra Deedy. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, Ms. Paolini explained how the villagers in a remote Kenyan village wanted to reach out to Americans after hearing of the 9/11 disasters. They gave what they could: 14 cows.

Ms. Paolini concluded by saying, "There is no nation so powerful it cannot be wounded, nor a people so small they cannot offer mighty comfort."

Financial Aid Encourages Socioeconomic Diversity in the Classroom

By ABBY BAUER (V)

Unlike racial or gender diversity, socioeconomic diversity in school is not something that is

of a family, Pingry uses a standard financial aid formula: Tuition Aid Data Services (TADS). The TADS formula accounts for a variety of factors in determining

makes a final evaluation.

For a prospective student, applying for financial aid can affect his or her admission decision in cases when available financial aid funds are insufficient to meet the family's demonstrated need. These cases of "need aware" admission decisions are rare, and always extremely difficult. The Admission Committee is never involved in or aware of a family's financial aid application. The admission and financial aid processes only overlap at the very end when the Financial Aid Committee seeks to allocate funds to those admission applicants that the Admission Committee chose to admit.

"For the 2014-2015 school year, we were able to achieve 'need-blind' admission in ninth grade," Assistant Director of Admissions and Director of Financial Aid Ms. Dale Seabury said. "It is our goal to be need-blind for all grades in the future, but every year presents different needs that are sometimes unpredictable."

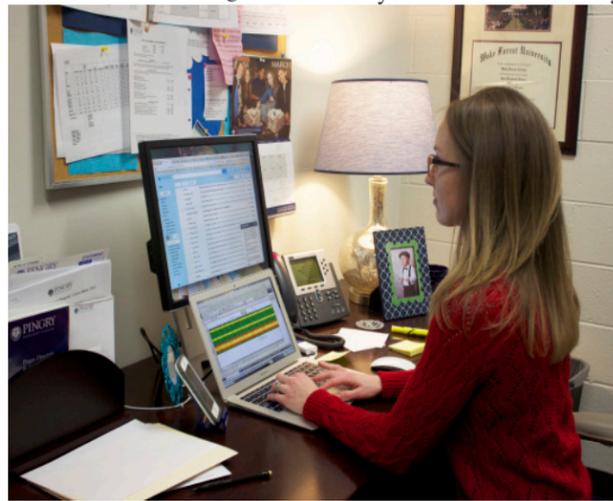
Pingry has been progressively working toward this goal since 2009, when both prospective and current families were affected by the economic downturn. In an attempt to meet the needs of these families, the Board of Trustees dramatically increased the financial aid budget and made it a priority to continue to increase it.

The most recent effort to provide more financial aid is The Blue Print for the Future Campaign. The Campaign plans to allocate

\$20 million to increase the financial aid endowment that will extend the opportunity for a Pingry education to a greater number of talented students, regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds.

The Campaign highlights the importance of cultivating a student body with a spectrum of financial resources. "Socioeconomic diversity should be treated the same as any other type of diversity in terms of the way students interact with one another," Ms. Seabury said. She added, "It helps our community work on issues of sensitivity in behavior and speech, as well as the thoughtfulness that fosters inclusion." The Financial Aid Committee strives to foster this sense of inclusion by including the costs of textbooks, spirit wear, school trips, and testing fees in the calculation of financial aid awards.

Ms. Seabury and the Financial Aid Committee are always looking for ways to refine financial aid policy to make it more sensitive to the culture of Pingry and effective in serving the needs of families in the community. Ultimately, she concludes that it is up to the students to learn to understand and accept the socio-economic differences that exist in our community. "Any time you have a difference, there is an opportunity for tension to surface. When you are around people who are different from you, it is important to lean into your discomfort. I think that tension can be productive, as long as we are thoughtful about our approach to it."



Ms. Seabury, Director of Financial Aid, works on her computer. I. Zinn (VI)

apparent or perhaps even realized. But in reality, fifteen percent of the student body from kindergarten through grade 12 currently receives financial aid awards.

Financial aid at Pingry, for both prospective and already admitted students, is need-based. "Need" is defined as the difference between the estimated total cost of attendance, including tuition and expected fees, and a family's ability to pay for educational costs. Pingry does not award academic, athletic, or artistic scholarships to students to eliminate or offset the cost of tuition.

In order to calculate the "need"

a family's ability to afford the cost of attending Pingry. While the most significant consideration is parental income, the formula uses other information such as family assets, age of parent(s), number of dependents, housing and medical expenses and number of children in tuition charging schools to calculate the financial aid award. After a family's submission of the Pingry Request for Financial Aid form, the TADS financial aid application, and supporting documentation such as tax returns and letters of special circumstance, the Financial Aid Committee completely reviews the application and

New Jersey High Schoolers Display Work at 19th Annual Student Photography Exhibition

By HANNAH CURTIS (V)

As the winter season came to a close, the 19th Annual Student Photography Exhibition was on display in the Hofstetter Gallery. The exhibition displayed over two hundred photos that range from digital to traditional film style. This showcase not only presented photos taken from Pingry students, but also from several students in other schools.

Photos ranged from portraits to artistic perspectives of nature and emphasize individuality. Taraja Arnold (V) said, "It was interesting to see how talented high school students can be. Everyone

showed their own individuality in the photos."

Many students agreed that they appreciated the variety of photographs and that showcasing work from various schools provides different perspectives in the themes of photography.

Aidan Zola (V) said, "What was most interesting was the sheer diversity of the photos. I was struck by the huge spectrum of student expression."

Matt Rice (VI) added, "Photography is all about composition, and being exposed to other students work is a good way to develop your own eye."

Several seniors whose photos were displayed, expressed

their appreciation for how the showcase represented their growth in the photography program. As Nicole Mo said, "Since I've been participating

in the annual photo show for three years now, it's cool to see how my peers' and my styles have changed over time."



Student photography in the gallery. I. Zinn (VI)

Elliot Reviews House of Cards Season Three (Warning: Spoilers)

By ALEXIS ELLIOT (III)

On February 27, Netflix released the third season of its hit show House of Cards. The

series is based off of the life of Frank Underwood, a calculating politician in Washington, D.C., who advances from Majority Whip to Vice President to

President of the United States. Frank and his wife Claire are powerhouses in Washington, and their tactics are cutthroat and at many times unexpected. Before becoming First Lady, Claire ran a successful non-profit organization and worked with the former First Lady to pass a bill on sexual assault. Since they don't have kids, the Underwoods are able to fully devote their time to their jobs and working towards making Frank the most powerful person in the free world.

As season three opens, newly sworn in President Frank Underwood visits his father's grave in his hometown of Gaffney, Georgia. The media and Frank's advisors are prohibited from accompanying the President in seeing his father's grave. Frank opens

up the season by breaking the fourth wall and talking to the viewers about his father's life and lonely death. Frank then proceeds to urinate on the grave, fully exemplifying his deep hatred for his father and his cruel nature.

At the end of season two, Doug suffered a traumatic hit to the head by Rachel Posner, a call girl Doug had tried to conceal from the public. The season left most viewers believing he was dead. However, season three reveals that the hard working assistant is alive but struggling to regain his strength. Doug desperately wants to go back to Capitol Hill and support his boss, who has just become President. His recovery is extremely slow, and the chances of a full recovery are small.

Not only does Doug hit a rough patch, but Frank's presidency and image are also struggling. His approval rating is slipping and his efforts to get things done are failing. People are wishing that the former president, Garrett Walker, had not been impeached. Frank tries to put together a plan called "America Works" to lower unemployment rates and give Americans more jobs, but many disapprove of the plan. After only a couple months into the presidency, Frank's top advisors urge him not to run for reelection in 2016 due to his failures as president.

To add salt to the Underwoods' wounds, a senator humiliates Claire as she goes through the nomination process for the US Ambassador to the United Nations. She acciden-

tally says that the military is irrelevant to what she was previously discussing, but the senator changes the context and makes it seem as though Claire thinks the military is not important in general. The media blows up the incident and for the first time, viewers see Claire fail.

Through all of these failures and losses, the Underwoods finally face a fight that they may not be able to overcome. The beginning of season three slowly escalates in stark contrast to the tumultuous start of season three where Frank murdered news reporter, Zoe Barnes. This build up of failures and the Underwoods' loss of control causes viewers to wonder if the Underwoods can recover or if Frank's power will quickly run out.



House of Cards cover image. Courtesy Google Images

The Brains Behind Pingry's Mainframe

By RACHEL WU (V)

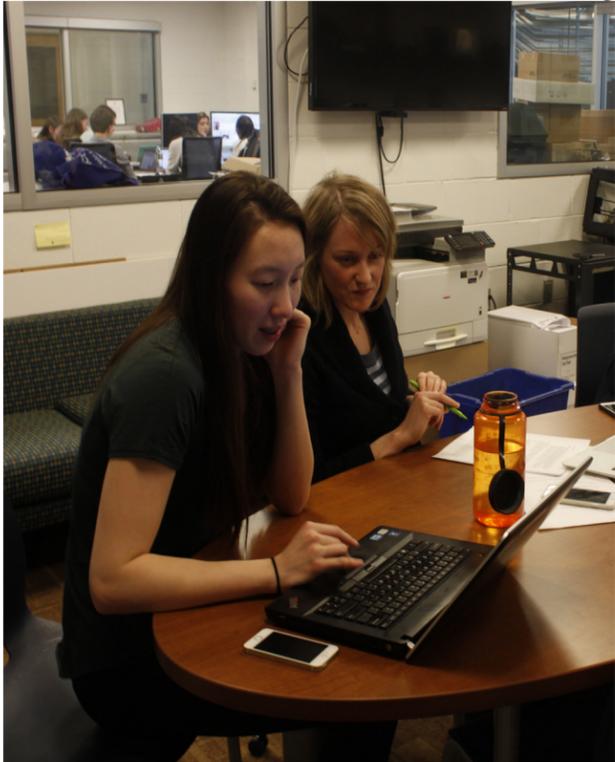
During the 2012-2013 school year, the Upper School began its transition to a 1-to-1 learning environment, in which each student was required to bring a laptop to school each day. In an effort to prepare students for a thorough understanding of technology in the 21st century, Pingry implemented this revolutionary plan in the fall of 2013 and continues to fine-tune it today.

An integral part of the way this system works is the Tech Team, consisting of six faculty members:

been seamless, other parts have been challenging." Although 85% of students had already been bringing their laptops to school before the system was implemented, it is now much more convenient for teachers who want to use technology in the day-to-day classroom.

Mr. Burkhart said that the best part of working on the Tech Team is "being able to think critically about design, education, and technology, while still interacting with students every day."

The worst part, however, is that "it can be frustrating



H. Park (V)
Dr. Jones helps I. Shu (V) will tech problems in the Technology Department Office.

Systems Engineer Mr. Apu Mullick '93, Systems Administrator Mr. Dave Azar, Director of Educational and Information Technology Mr. Brian Burkhart, Technology Specialist Mr. Steve Frantz, Systems Engineer Mr. Rich Jensen, and Educational Technology Integrator Dr. Megan Jones.

The Tech Team supports all of the technological needs for our faculty, students, and staff, which include computers, mobile devices, and classroom technology, such as Smart Boards and projectors.

In addition to teaching one computer science class, Mr. Burkhart manages the technology department, oversees the professional development training for teachers and students, and manages the Student Technology Committee (STC).

Mr. Burkhart's role at Pingry consists of attending administrative team meetings; teaching students; and helping faculty, staff, and students with any technological problems they are experiencing. He also directs the technology department at the Lower School, requiring him to spend every Thursday at the Short Hills Campus.

When asked about transitioning to the 1-to-1 program, Mr. Burkhart said that while "in some ways it has

to communicate with everyone at once."

The Tech Team "can often be the scapegoat, while they are trying to be part of the solution," he said.

Mr. Azar is the newest member of the Tech Team. His responsibilities include providing technical support and problem resolution for faculty, staff, and students. On a day-to-day basis, Mr. Azar monitors and maintains all of Pingry's technology systems, including the in-house Data Center, Google Apps for Education services, databases, WiFi, telephones, and Internet connectivity.

Mr. Azar says that he feels "technology integrated into the learning environment is a key step in preparing students for the future." With the new emphasis on technological advancements, the Tech Team feels that 1-to-1 learning "empowers teachers and students to go beyond the traditional boundaries of the classroom."

The Tech Team has helped established a learning environment that "allows kids to experience an ubiquitous level of technology that will prove essential in the future." In the future, the team will continue to play an integral role in maintaining the 1-to-1 learning system here at Pingry.

New Courses for Next Year Aim to Enhance Language Study and Environmental Issues

By KATHRYN ABBOTT (V)

At the end of February, all returning students submitted their course signup forms for the upcoming academic year. While students could hear about many courses from older friends and siblings, they could also opt for several new choices. Starting in the Fall of 2015, three new courses will be offered: Chinese 7 Advanced, Honors Environmental Science: Feeding and Fueling 9 Billion, and Environmental Art. Changes in curriculum help to accommodate the wide net of interests of many students by providing them with new courses to choose from.

Of all the foreign language classes, Chinese has become an increasingly popular course in the last few years. According to Chinese teacher Mrs. Weiwei Yu, Chinese 7 Advanced will be "for juniors who are currently in Chinese 6 and would like to continue the same language." Other students may enroll in this class as well if they pass the placement test.

Director of Global Programs and Biology teacher Mr. Jeff Jewett, who currently teaches Biology 1 and 2, is thrilled to teach Honors

Environmental Science in the upcoming school year. Mr. Jewett taught AP Environmental Science at Deerfield Academy, and wants to

course, filled with labs and field trips," Mrs. Chatterji said. The class will consist of a self-selecting group of students interested in an

experience on aspects of the environment that are "used and abused." It is open to rising Form V and VI students who are interested in applied sciences. Mr. Jewett hopes to further develop the program in future years.

Environmental Art, a single semester course, is becoming a full year class next year. "I believe that the number one goal of green group is to have a strong environmental curriculum," Art teacher Mr. Peter Delman said, "and that is something unique to Pingry."

The extensive selection of environmental courses at Pingry expresses the school's dedication toward incorporating the environment into the classroom. Offering environmental history, environmental science, and environmental art, "is truly something to be proud of," Mr. Delman said. The values of the Environmental Art course add a unique twist to the curriculum. Students use materials from the environment to produce their art. The school has a designated green art path, where students may struggle to distinguish art from nature. Mr. Delman is excited to see the sign ups for this new course.



I. Zinn (VI)

Two new classes next year will focus on the environment. introduce an environmental science course to Pingry.

"This is a course that the school has needed for a while," Upper School Dean of Academics Mrs. Anya Chatterji said, "and Mr. Jewett is incredibly experienced in this topic."

The class further promotes Pingry's long-term goal to follow green initiatives and sustain the green mission. Environmental science is going to be a "great

education mixed with environmental values.

According to Mr. Jewett, Honors Environmental Science is an AP level course that will focus on population growth and sustainable food and energy. "This class will make normally invisible things visible," he said. He explains that "although this can be a depressing topic," he will try to make it "a solutions-oriented course." Students will gain first-hand

SDLC Introduces Community Forums to Discuss Important Social Issues

By JESS FOY (V)

The Student Diversity Leadership Club, or SDLC, has been moving ahead with its plan to create Community Forums, despite the difficult scheduling conflicts due to various snow days, delays and special schedules.

Through these forums, "SDLC hopes to spark conversation on various important issues in our Community," according to SDLC student leader Isabella Zanobini (V). The first forum was held on Friday, February 27th. Students met by grade during Community Time in their designated locations.

Dr. Diana Artis, Coordinator of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs and the faculty leader of SDLC, explained, "These are stu-

dent-run discussions that give an opportunity for students to converse on a specific issue."

During forums, SDLC club leaders are responsible for running meetings and helping students break up into smaller groups to discuss more specific, but still topic-related, questions.

After the small group discussion, the entire grade comes together in order to give students the opportunity to voice their thoughts and opinions to the larger group.

In order to make these forums as comfortable as possible, SDLC gives students specific guidelines to follow. For instance, students are encouraged to give their opinions using the "I" perspective, using phrases such as "I feel" or "I believe," as opposed to

general pronouns.

The discussions are also meant to be kept confidential. Dr. Artis said, "The

had expressed concerns to teachers as well as SDLC leaders about this issue.

When asked about plans



I. Zinn (VI)
Seniors discuss the topic of offensive language at the first community forum.

forums are designed to try and create a safe space in which students can lead discussion about topics that concern them."

The first forum topic was the inappropriate use of language as many students

for the rest of the year regarding SDLC, Dr. Artis said, "there aren't any more specific plans, but SDLC hopes that these community forums will help to evolve other diversity based activities."



I. Zinn (VI)



I. Zinn (VI)

Creative Writing Festival Features Acclaimed Writers

By TUCKER BICKELL (V),
GEORGIA MILLER (VI),
NICOLE MO (VI) and MEGAN
PAN (IV)

On Friday, February 6, the school hosted the Justin Society Creative Writing Festival, a feature of school life for the past 19 years. Organized by English teacher Dr. Susan Dineen, and funded in honor of a former student, the festival is designed to promote appreciation for creative writing in multiple genres.

“Our hope,” Dr. Dineen said, “is to inspire and excite our students—especially those interested in creative writing—by exposing them to a range of contemporary writers. We require our junior and senior Creative Writing and New Voices students to participate, and we offer all students an opportunity to sign up.”

This year, the writers included two novelists, one memoirist and short story writer, and two poets.

Jessica Knoll, a senior editor at *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, did her first public reading from her novel “Luckiest Girl Alive,” which will be published by Simon and Schuster on May 15.

Ms. Knoll has worked as the Senior Editor at *Cosmopolitan* and the Articles Editor at *SELF* magazine, where she wrote about career, health, relationships and culture.

While working at *Cosmopolitan*, Ms. Knoll took free creative writing classes, which were sponsored by the magazine, at New York University. In the class, Ms. Knoll developed a character, which inspired her to write her book. She stopped working at both magazines to focus on her novel.

Ms. Knoll drew inspiration from a past crime, which she would not reveal, that captured her attention. She was enthralled by the crime and “wanted to tackle it from a fictitious angle.”

Novelist Kim McCreight is the author of “Reconstructing Amelia,” which spent several weeks on the *New York Times* best seller list and was nominated for both an Edgar and an Anthony award. Her second novel, “Where They Found Her,” is coming out in May.

Both novelists have already arranged for their novels to be made into films. Reese Witherspoon will direct “Luckiest Girl Alive,” and HBO has film rights to “Recon-



Poets Aja Monet and Tina Chang share writing tips.

structing Amelia.” McCreight’s teen trilogy, “The Outliers,” will be published by Harper Teen in 2016 and will later be arranged for film by Lionsgate.

Said Sayrafiezadeh works in both fiction and non-fiction. Currently working on his first novel, he has received critical acclaim for “When Skateboards Will Be Free: A Memoir” and “Brief Encounters With the Enemy,” a short story collection.

In addition to his short fiction, he has also published personal es-

formed at renowned venues such as the Apollo Theater and at the NAACP’s Barack Obama Inaugural event in Washington, D.C. Her works include “The Black Unicorn Sings” and “Chorus: A Literary Mixtape,” which includes a collaboration with Saul Williams.

Ms. Chang, the first woman to be named Poet Laureate of Brooklyn, is the author of the poetry collections “Half-Lit Houses” and “Of Gods & Strangers.” The recipient of awards from the

completely about me,” she said. “It’s about everything I could possibly do in the world and this role that I’m supposed to be playing.”

The morning began with a school-wide assembly, in which all participating writers read a selection from their work. As the day proceeded, participating students and English classes attended Q&A sessions with the writers in both Hauser and the faculty lounge.

Mr. Sayrafiezadeh noted his appreciation for “the organic, conversational feel” of the faculty lounge discussion as well as the diversity of thought represented among the authors.

When a student expressed interest in becoming a professional writer, Mr. Sayrafiezadeh encouraged her and any potential writers out there. “Pursue what you want. Don’t worry about the obstacles,” he said.

After a lunch with the guests, the writers conducted writing workshops with the students in classrooms, the faculty lounge and the library.

In Ms. Knoll’s fiction session, each student prepared a short dialogue in 10 minutes that focused on a character in denial. She reminded the students that context is important for scenes that are solely dialogue. Each student had a chance to read his or her piece aloud to the class, and Ms. Knoll provided feedback on each one.

Ms. McCreight’s workshop opened with a reading of her first published work, “Clara’s Room.” She explained to students that she wrote the story for a writing class



Said Sayrafiezadeh reads an excerpt from his memoir. I. Zinn (VI)

when the teacher gave students a box of objects to write about. Ms. McCreight conducted a similar activity in the fiction workshop, handing out a box with an assortment of objects for the students to write about. The students then shared their stories, and Ms. McCreight offered feedback on the students’ work.

In Mr. Sayrafiezadeh workshop on memoir writing, he challenged students to write their memories from different perspectives: first-person, third person, and finally, from a different person’s point of view.

He then discussed the importance of having a clear progression from the beginning to the middle to the end of a story.

Emery Sorvino (VI) said that she found the prompts useful because “they forced us to think differently about our memories.”

“He showed us how anyone is capable of writing a memoir because everyone has memories and a story to tell,” she added. “It was a really great experience to get advice from someone who actually has a published memoir.”

During Ms. Monet’s poetry workshop, students were asked to pick a moment in their lives that they wish had occurred differently and describe it the way they wish it had happened. The poets emphasized the use of sensory details and how different people perceive events differently. Afterward, students shared and discussed their work.

Ms. Monet encouraged stu-

dents to use poetry as a “medium to change the world,” and to reflect on and discuss the world around them.

She also discussed the importance of individuality in poetry, saying, “We all have eyes and we all have mouths, but you don’t see the world the same way I do. But it’s strange: the more uniquely ‘you’ you are, the more universal it is.”

Meanwhile, in Ms. Chang’s workshop, students were asked to write lists of the most important events in their lives, and then choose one to draw. The students then traded their drawings, and each student wrote a poem based on another person’s drawing. At the end, students shared their poems with the group.

Liz Kraeutler (VI) said, “Ms. Chang did a great job of making poetry less intimidating and more accessible to everyone.” She added, “It was fun, and we all learned a lot.”

The student response to the day’s events was overwhelmingly positive. Matt Dannenbaum (VI) said, “This was my first time ever talking to professional writers, so it was a new experience for me.”

Jazmin Palmer (V) expressed enthusiasm and appreciation. “I really loved the entire festival,” she said. “I enjoyed the assembly and found it really helpful.”

The conversation sessions were very inspiring because the writers all talked about the difficulty in the writing process, which we all experience.”

“The Q&A section after the assembly was by far my favorite part. All the writers in the fiction section in the faculty lounge were so relaxed and casual,” Chris Witte (V) said.

“It was cool how the writers themselves were asking each other about techniques, styles, and how each goes about his or her writing.”

The writers were equally impressed by the students, commenting on their openness and curiosity.

“I thought it was fantastic,” Mr. Sayrafiezadeh said. “I always think of myself back in high school and I don’t remember being so engaged and enthusiastic and frankly intelligent as you guys seem. The school is really wonderful. It was a wonderful day. I love being around students.”



Jessica Knoll reads from her novel.

says in *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, *The New York Times* and countless anthologies. A professor at both Hunter College and New York University, he received a 2013 Outstanding Teacher Award from NYU.

The two poets were Aja Monet and Tina Chang.

Ms. Monet is best known as the youngest individual to win the *Nuyorican Poet’s Café Grand Slam* title. She has per-

Academy of American Poets and the Barbara Deming Memorial Fund, among others, she currently teaches poetry at Sarah Lawrence College and is an international faculty member at the City University at Hong Kong.

A self-proclaimed lover of travel, Ms. Chang cited her experiences abroad as a source of inspiration for her poetry. “Your sense of self gets shattered because you realize, wow, the world isn’t

I. Zinn (VI)

Alumni Urge Upperclassmen to Explore Diverse Career Paths

By MATT FROMM (VI)

This year, the juniors and seniors participated in the annual Career Day event on Friday, January 30, 2015. The upperclassmen spent the morning listening to Pingry alumni speak about their careers across many different disciplines.

To begin the morning, the upperclassmen gathered in Hauser Auditorium to listen to Dr. Michael Nitabach ’84 engage in a conversation with Headmaster Mr. Nat Conard about his experience at Pingry and the career that he subsequently pursued in biology research.

Dr. Nitabach worked as both a lawyer and a researcher before ultimately deciding that his true passion lay in clinical research. After graduating from Pingry, Dr. Nitabach matriculated to the University of Pennsylvania and then received a Ph.D. from Yale University, where he now teaches and leads a

neuroscience laboratory. He also received a J.D. from New York University’s School of Law.

Following the keynote discussion, the juniors and seniors split into groups or-

ganized by career discipline. Each student attended three different career sessions. Avni Memani (V) enjoyed the law session, saying, “I liked those speakers because they all came from different aspects

of the field. There was someone who worked in criminal justice, someone who worked in corporate law, and someone who worked in fraud at the SEC. There was a lot of variety within one career path.”

Other students felt equally positive about the other disciplines. Kamau Holston (VI) said, “The people at the media seminar were really good. They were relatable and didn’t preach about how important college is or why making money is the secret to life. I found that interesting.”

Andrew Verdesca (VI) added, “In all, I thought the speakers did an excellent job of providing perspective on their respective careers, the responsibilities that those disciplines entail, and how one would go about pursuing them.”

In reflecting on the events of the day, Kiran Chokshi (V) said, “As a junior, I wasn’t sure what to expect for my first Career Day, but I can now say that it exceeded my expectations. Listening to the speakers reminded me that you can always forge your own path, and the stories of the alumni in the Entrepreneurship seminar especially interested me. Their comments inspired me

to think about the elasticity of the world and the ability to create things from scratch.”

Mr. David Fahey ’99, who organized Career Day, thought the event went well. He said, “Pingry alums always enjoy coming back to campus and getting to engage with students, so for the Development Office it’s one of the most fun days of the year.”

When asked what was new this time around, Mr. Fahey said, “We introduced Engineering, Technology, Non Profit Management, and Management Consulting sessions this year, which were not available last year. All the speakers and Pingry’s trustees were also invited to lunch together afterwards.”

Across the school, many upperclassmen agreed that Career Day was both successful and enjoyable, helping students to learn more about the careers they may want to pursue someday. The student body looks forward to another great event next year.



Headmaster Conard interviews Dr. Mike Nitabach ’84

I. Zinn (VI)

Mr. Graham Macmillan '93 Promotes Progress

By **ABBY BAUER (V)**

Since graduating from Pingry, Mr. Graham Macmillan '93 has achieved international success, quite literally. As Senior Program Officer at Citi Foundation, Mr. Macmillan oversees the international grantmaking section, which works to promote economic progress and expand financial inclusion in communities around the world.

Mr. Macmillan realized he wanted to work globally while at Colby College, where he double majored in international studies and history. He then received his M.Sc. from the Wagner School of

the power and capability of the private sector to drive positive impact.

Mr. Macmillan said that the best part of working for a company with an international presence is the "exposure to a lot of interesting and important things." He noted that the global issues the foundation strives to address are "not small challenges," which in turn create an environment of "interesting and creative people working together to solve them."

In reflecting on his time spent at Pingry, Mr. Macmillan said the school influenced him both professionally and personally. In addition to helping him master



Courtesy of The Citi Foundation

Public Service at New York University, and his M.B.A. through a joint program at NYU's Stern School of Business, London School of Economics, and HEC Paris School of Management.

However, Mr. Macmillan recalls having his first "epiphany" at his first job at Helen Keller International, a non-profit that works to save the sight and lives of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. His first assignment for the organization was to travel to reservations in New Mexico and offer eye care services to the local tribes. While the trip was "somewhat of a failure," as many of the tribes resisted the services, the poverty and disparity Mr. Macmillan witnessed had a profound effect on him. "I realized I was onto something intellectually and emotionally fulfilling. It solidified my mission in life to have a social and economic impact in the world," he said.

Now living up to this mission at Citi Foundation, Mr. Macmillan manages international grant investments that support communities in the 91 countries where Citi has a presence. He also oversees specific and complicated projects that harness

the game of ping-pong, which he fondly remembers playing in the student lounge, Pingry has provided him with "incredible writing tools," which he has utilized throughout his career, as well as "the ability to construct thoughts and arguments."

Mr. Macmillan also said that the Honor Code has laid the foundation for the "value and communication system" that permeates his life, noting that he still remembers the honor pledge we sign on all graded work.

Mr. Macmillan advises current Pingry students to find a balance between their academic and personal lives and to maintain the network of friends they form in high school. "Relationship skills are critical in the working world and the ability to relate and communicate with others is invaluable," he said.

Mr. Macmillan further encourages students to acknowledge the global challenges we will face in the future, ranging from climate change to economic inequality. "As the future leaders of the world, you must understand the global issues ahead of you and develop the skills needed to address them as adults."

Ms. Brooke Conti '09 Pursues Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences at Rockefeller University

By **HALEY PARK (V)**

Career Day speaker Ms. Brooke Conti '09 is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences at Rockefeller University, specializing in cell biology and genetics. She is in her second year of the five-year program.

At Pingry, Ms. Conti was a member of the SMART team, ski team, and JV soccer and lacrosse teams. One of Ms. Conti's most influential teachers at Pingry was former Biology teacher Mr. Tommie Hata. Her other favorite teachers include Science teachers Mr. William Bourne and Mrs. Deirdre O'Mara, English teacher Mr. Tom Keating, and former Art teacher Mrs. Marge Lear-Svedman.

An avid lover of science at Pingry, Ms. Conti said the school has "fantastic opportunities to get involved in science." Pingry enables students to get "[their] feet wet." For Ms. Conti, taking research courses at a high school level was eye opening to what the world of science is actually like.

After graduating from Pingry, Ms. Conti went on to attend the University of Notre Dame where she majored in science business.

While there, she studied the basic mechanisms of cell death and how they

ating placental stem cells from natural killer cells for oncological purposes. Natu-

"It is rewarding to know that you're working to cure actual patients. A lot of the



Courtesy of Peter Chollick

play a role in breast cancer metastasis.

Ms. Conti then interned at a biotechnological company as a member of the market research team. The following year, she worked at a biopharmaceutical company, Celgene Cellular Therapeutics, in the Research and Development department. She was part of a research group that worked on differenti-

ral killer cells are part of the body's immune system and have the ability to lyse and kill cancer cells.

Ms. Conti said, "It made me interested in applied science, as it really was at the cross between therapeutic development and basic research."

When asked why she chose applied science as a career, Ms. Conti said,

she said,

stuff that I study works towards curing cancer and other diseases."

Ms. Conti's advice for current high school students is to "do something that you love and that makes you happy. If you pursue what you love, it will make it easier to work hard." She also encourages students to "not be afraid of trying new things."

Mr. Billy McFarland '10 Has Success With Companies Spling and Magnises

By **MARK SHTRAKHMAN (V)**

Unlike most Pingry graduates, Billy McFarland '10 never finished college. In fact, he dropped out of Bucknell University after only two semesters to start a company.



Courtesy of Guest of a Guest Inc.

He had already started his first business, a website that matched web sites to designers, at the mere age of 13. In 2010, he founded Spling, his first major venture. The company is a tech-driven ad platform that helps brands

increase their media engagement and marketing revenue by optimizing their content presentation. Mr. McFarland still runs Spling as its CEO.

In 2013, Mr. McFarland caught the New York City social scene by storm with Magnises, an exclusive black credit card designed to appeal to millennials. Cardholders have access to numerous perks including seats at top city restaurants and bars, a fleet of private drivers, a member-exclusive "Townhouse," and much more. As the CEO of Magnises, he focuses primarily on developing the brand and building the team.

To Mr. McFarland, Pingry is his highest level of formal education. But the school had a much larger impact on him. According to Mr. McFarland, he "came out of school a pretty good writer, and I think that's something universal across all Pingry students. But most importantly, Pingry's environment put me in a

position where it was okay to work on a lot of really weird non-academic passions."

Mr. McFarland has many fond memories of his days here including "going on the Belize trip with Mrs. O'Mara, making the playoffs senior year of football, and dodging Coach Scott to avoid getting detentions for not tucking in my shirt."

Magnises allows him to pursue his goals daily, and that's why he loves working there. "I have lots of eclectic passions and Magnises lets me do all of them and make a business out of it. I can work with rappers, programmers, and investors. I can also do a lot of crazy stuff and justify it as creating experiences and building a brand."

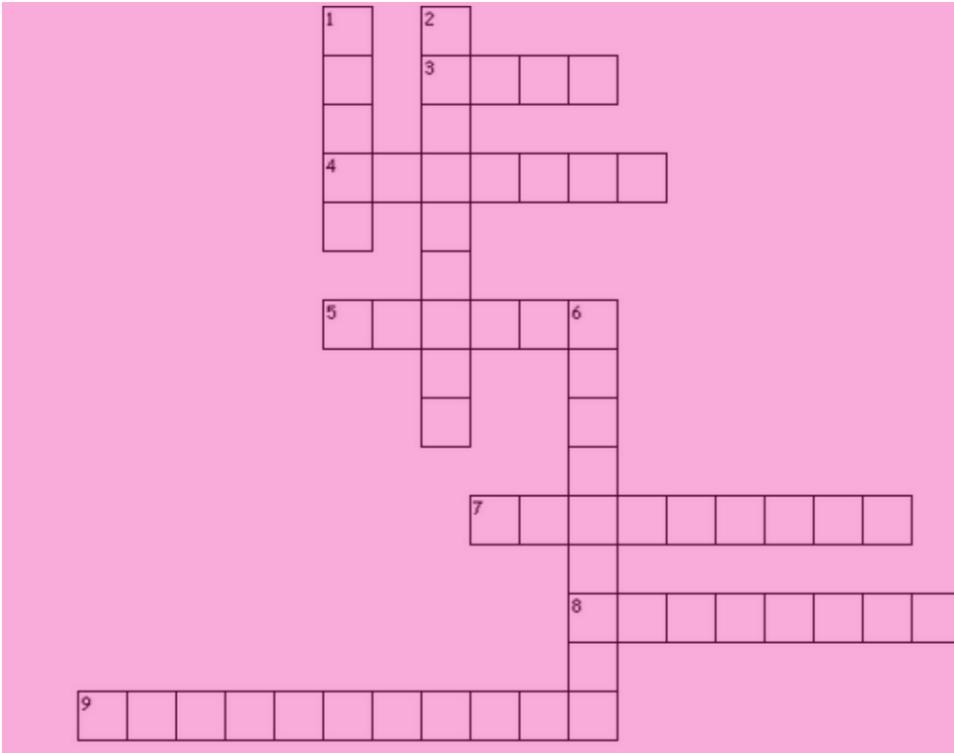
Mr. McFarland's most important piece of advice is that "high school, college, work, etc. is all what you make of it. Find out what you love to do, and double down and focus on that."

Special Thanks to All Of the Career Day Speakers!

Steven Barg '80, Kenneth Blau '88, Alexandra Braunstein (O'Connor) '97, Curtis Brinkman '89, Michael Brody '79, Constantine Christakos '92, Gaetano Cipriano '74, John Connor '92, Brooke Conti '09, Charlotte Conway '08, Andrew Cortese '93, Eric Davich '02, Caroline Diemar '99, Tracy Dungo Porges '03, Matthew Estabrook '89, Eduardo Fernandez '81, Amy Ruth Finegold '98, Todd Forrest '87, Alexa Gale '99, Elizabeth Garcia '10, Devon Graham '99, Margaret Harjes Mulry '94, Lauren Kovacs '00, Laura (Yorke) Kulkarni '98, Robert Kushen '80, Alison Little '82, Graham Macmillan '93, Gautam Malhotra '92, Stephen McCarthy '77, William McFarland '10, Abigail Merin '00, Jessica Merkel-Keller '00, Lee Murnick '89, Mike Nitabach '84, Katherine O'Connor '06, Christian O'Donnell '10, Maggie O'Toole '05, Andrew Pasternak '89, Kelly Peeler '06, David Perlmutter '80, Daniel Pincus '96, John Plum '67, Craig Ramirez '07, Mary Sarro-Waite '01, Deborah Sitting '88, Caraline Sogliuzzo '05, Aimee Sostowski '97, Charlie Stillitano '77, Gordon Sulcer '61, Jennifer Taylor '05, Janine Tramontana '85, Edward Ward '85, Elana Wilf Tanzman '04, Dana Zolli '03

March Crossword Puzzle

March Sudoku Puzzle



		1				6		
	7		5		1		2	
		9				3		
8				6				4
	6		2		5		3	
9				3				1
		3				8		
	4		7		6		9	
		2				5		

- Across**
- 3. The newest member of the Tech Team
 - 4. The last name of the ski team captain
 - 5. The runner-up in the Lebow Oratorical Competition
 - 7. The park where Alan Turing cracked the Enigma Machine
 - 8. The author of the "Diversity of Thought" article in Haley Park (V)'s
 - 9. 2 new courses for next year will focus on _____
- Down**
- 1. Where Mr. Macmillan'93 received his undergraduate degree
 - 2. The character played by Sonali Mehta (V) in the musical
 - 6. The author of *Reconstructing Amelia*

All of the words in the puzzle are Pingry themed. There are no spaces in any of the answers.

Hits and Misses

- Hit:** Mr. Thomson's circles
- Miss:** Trem's 2's?, 4's?, 9's?, R's?
- Hit:** Fresh Mozzarella
- Miss:** Cookies only on Fridays.
- Hit:** Creative Writing Festival
- Miss:** We can't eat grapes
- Hit:** Mr. Jenkins' cowboy boots
- Hit:** Spring Break
- Miss:** Spring?
- Hit:** Greg Cortazzo
- Hit:** "House of Cards" Season Three
- Miss:** All of the homework we didn't do
- Hit:** Dress Down Day Every Day

Once you have solved the Crossword or Sudoku Puzzle please take a photo or scan your solutions, and send them to thepingry-record@gmail.com. The first person to send the correct answers to the puzzles will be featured in our next issue and get a prize. Happy Puzzling!

Congratulations to Hunter Conti (VI) and Kevin Chow (V) for solving the Crossword Puzzle! Come to the Record Office for your prize!

Word in the Hall: What do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?



LLOYD WILLIS (V)
"Offensive lineman in the NFL."



CAROL PORGES (VI)
"Curator for the costume exhibit at the MET!"



RAMSEY BINNS (2)
"President of the United States."

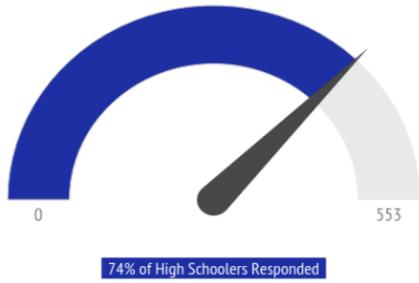


PAIGE MENNIN (5)
"Teacher"



JAKE SHANNON (6)
"Architect"

Survey Responses



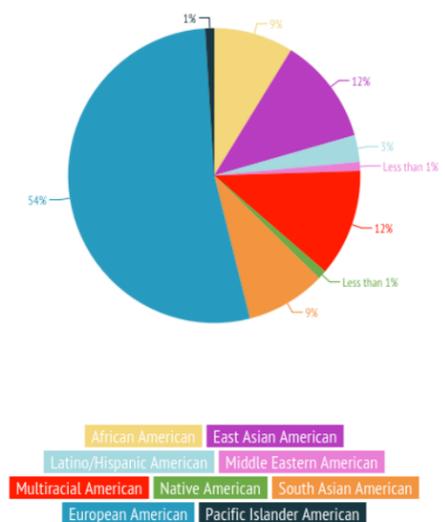
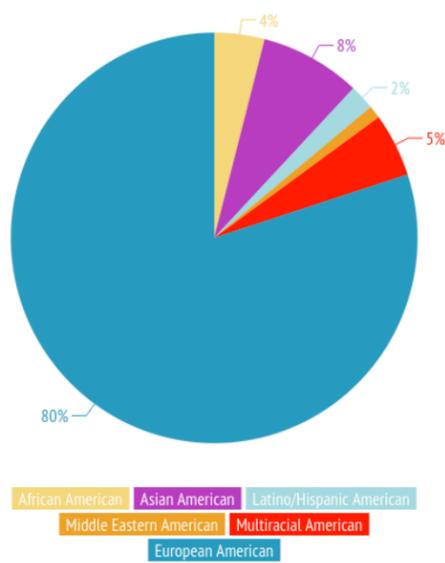
20% in 2005

The percentage of students that year who thought there was the "Perfect Amount" or "More than Enough" racial/ethnic diversity among students.

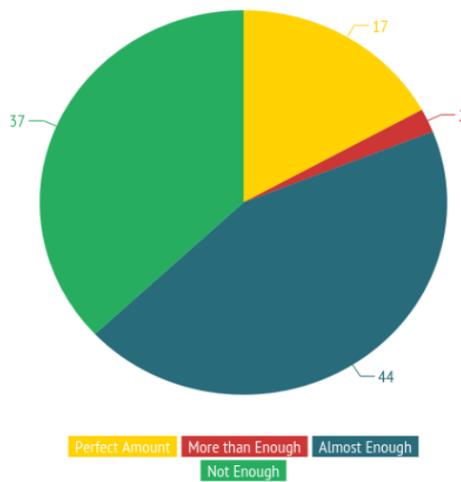
58% in 2015

The percentage of respondents who answered the same way in 2015.

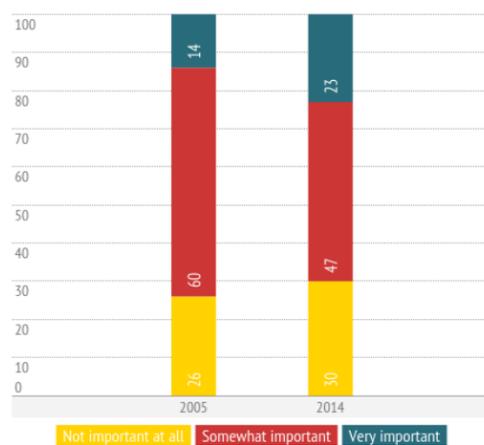
Student Body by Race/Ethnicity



How would you describe the amount of racial/ethnic diversity among the student body? (2005)



How do you value socioeconomic diversity among students?



What Can We Take Away from The Survey Results?

By MARK SHTRAKHMAN (V)

The Pingry Record conducted a survey in late February to get a better understanding of what diversity means to students in the upper school. The Record conducted a similar survey a decade ago, and the results were compared when appropriate.

Overall Results

Seventy-four percent of Upper School students responded to the survey. According to this year's results, 41% of respondents believed that there is a "perfect amount" of racial/ethnic diversity in the student body, and another 17% thought that there is "more than enough." That is a substantial increase from 10 years ago, when only 18% and 2%, respectively, selected the same options. Furthermore, only 13% of respondents believe that there is not enough diversity among students, compared to 37% a decade ago.

A majority (55%) of today's students believes that there is a "perfect amount" or "more than enough" racial/ethnic diversity among the faculty. That is up from 14% in 2005.

When questioned about the

socioeconomic diversity of the student body, nearly a quarter of students said that there is a "perfect amount," and another quarter believes there is "not enough." Notably, 44% of respondents said, "I can't tell" with regards to this question.

Twenty-three percent of respondents value socioeconomic diversity as "very important." Another 47% see it as "somewhat important," and the final 30% classify it as "not important at all."

Overall, students valued racial/ethnic diversity more amongst students than in the faculty. Among respondents, 87% see this form of diversity as "very important" or "somewhat important." However, only 69% selected the same responses when asked about racial/ethnic diversity among the faculty.

Female/Male Differences

Female and male students also responded quite differently to all of the questions. Only 7% of boys believed that there is "not enough" racial/ethnic diversity among students in comparison to 17% of girls. Similarly, 9% of boys believed there is "not enough" racial/ethnic diversity. Seventeen percent of girls were of this same

opinion.

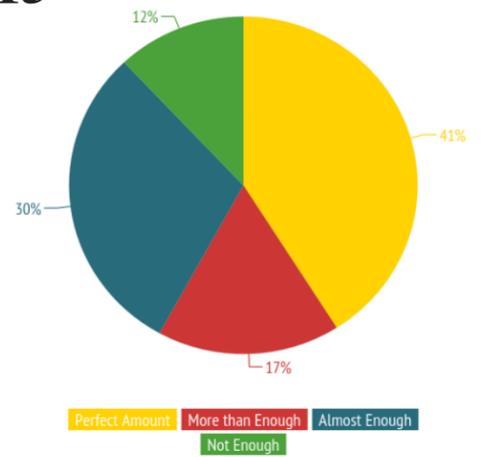
With regards to socioeconomic diversity among students, 40% of boys thought there is the "perfect amount" or "more than enough" at Pingry, in comparison to only 22% of girls. Thirty-one percent of girls responded, "I can't tell" as compared to only 19% of boys.

Students were asked how they value socioeconomic diversity among students, racial/ethnic diversity among the student body and racial/ethnic diversity among the faculty. In all three categories, boys responded "not important at all" more than girls. Girls tended to respond "very important" to these three questions significantly more than boys.

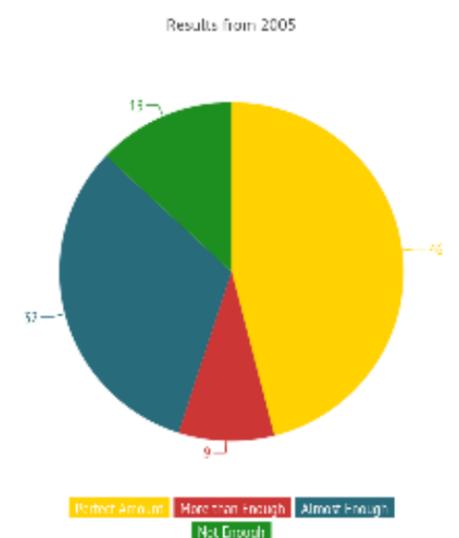
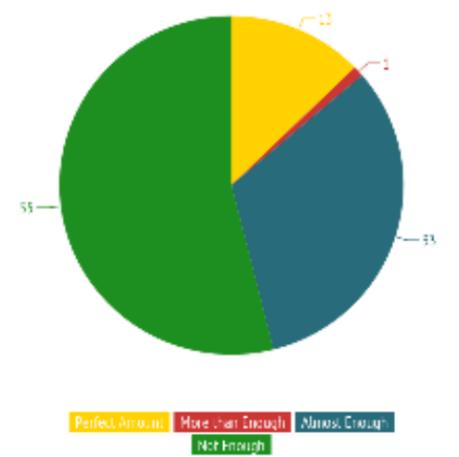
Methodology

The survey was conducted via Google Forms and was sent out to all high schoolers prior to a Community Forum on February 27th. The questionnaire was held open for 36 hours to give everyone the opportunity to respond. During that time, 411 responses were received. There were 197 female respondents, while the remaining 214 were male. There was a total of eight questions, and responses were required for each of them.

2015



How would you describe the amount of racial/ethnic diversity among the faculty?



Basketball, Skiing, and Fencing Squash the Competition

By MACKINLEY TAYLOR (IV), EDWARD JOHNSON (IV), MADDIE PARRISH (III), LINDSEY YU (III), COBY WEISS (IV), and JULIA AXTELL (V)

SKI TEAM

With the boys' ski team averaging eighth place and the girls' team averaging seventh place, the Pingry ski team has ended the season feeling proud. Captain Tucker Bickell (V) said the team had "a lot of underclassmen with a lot of potential" and that the team will continue improving their record in the next season. Although skeptical at first due to the young ages of many of the skiers, Bickell is happy with how the season turned out, especially after losing valuable skiers from last year's senior class.

Bickell, as well as assistant captain Grace Wollmuth (V), are quick to point out that the ski team's success lies in their strong camaraderie as a team.

For this reason, the team is able to give one hundred percent in practice, enabling them to reach their full potential. One disadvantage of the ski team's chances in meets is the team's small size.

This team is smaller than in years past and in order to be on the scoreboard, Bickell said, they "all must ski a flawless run."

Bickell said that joining the ski team "is a great way to play a winter sport and have a ton of fun" regardless of the level at which one is able to ski.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

13-11

Led by Head Coach Courtney Tierney and captains Lauren McLaughlin (VI) and Cory Ransom (VI), the Girl's Basketball team finished the season with a record of 13-11. McLaughlin said, "Our record is certainly not reflective of the efforts and true talent of the squad."

Looking back on the season, Ransom said, "We've had a really tough season in terms of injuries, illnesses and other big obstacles, but I'm so proud of how hard the team has fought." McLaughlin added, "everyone has taken it in stride and persevered through it all."

In the absence of many players throughout the season due to injuries, including both McLaughlin and Ransom, McLaughlin said, "I'm so proud of the girls, especially the younger ones, for stepping up and filling crucial roles for the team this year."

Looking towards the future, Ransom said, "I know that the team will become better and more competitive in the years to come." McLaughlin agreed, noting that "no matter the challenge, this team will always be working hard and giving it their all."

BOYS' FENCING

9-5

An amalgam of veterans and fresh newcomers brought a successful boys' fencing season to a close.

Brad Hong (V), Varsity Captain and Foil A, commented, "We've had a pretty successful season. We defeated some great teams like Bernards, North Hunterdon, and Voorhees, and we nearly beat Watchung Hills." At the District 3 Qualifiers, the team placed 5th overall, with the foil squad advancing to the Squad State Championships.

With three senior members, the team "lost some great fencers but gained even more," Brandon Li (IV) added.

These revitalizing additions concluded in success at District Qualifiers. Hong said, "Some foil fencers were very successful at the District Qualifiers. Apurva Memani (III) placed 7th individually and I placed 6th individually for Boy's Foil."

The successes of both Memani and Hong convey the cohesion between old

and new members to form this year's team. Facilitating the unification and incorporation of new members, captains Hong and Hunter Stires (VI) worked as a unit to lead the team. Memani accredited the team's success to "both the girls' and boys' captains."

Li summed up the season by saying, "We are a close team led by the inspirational Brad and Hunter. This year is one of our strong years."

GIRLS' SQUASH

11-2

Girls' Squash had a very successful season, finishing with a 11-2 record. Led by captains Diana Masch (VI) and Alessandra Ruggiero (VI), the team made school history by placing tenth at the US Squash High School Championships. The team

raderie than on emphasizing individual performance.

This season was the first season the girls' squash team outranked the boys' team. In reflecting on the team's performance at nationals, Julia Masch (IV) said, "We had some really tight and dramatic matches."

Captain Diana Masch added, "I am extremely proud of the team for making Pingry history and finishing tenth at nationals. It's crazy to think about how much the team has improved."

BOYS' SQUASH

10-5

Having finished the season with a 10-5 record and a national ranking of 14th, the boys' squash team continues to be very successful each year. Coach Ramsay

and complicated logistics of our day-to-day routine require an extra level of commitment from our players, and that commitment is reflected in our results." While not performing exceptionally well in the first half of the season, the team was able to pull through and get a couple of key wins in the second half of the season.

Although it took a major hit from losing kids to graduation last year, the relatively young team was "the best team in the state of New Jersey and finished top 14 in the nation," Captain Jonathan Zeitels (VI) said. In addition, there are some strong squash players in the middle school hoping to make a big impact on the team next year.

GIRLS' FENCING

13-5



D. Masch (VI) hits a backhand while playing a squash match at Drew University.

H. Park (V)

remained undefeated until nationals.

According to Zayna Nasoura (V), the team performed very well because every member worked hard to improve. Additionally, the team focused more on creating an atmosphere of cama-

rade said, "Our success is due primarily to the tremendous commitment that our players have for the team and for the sport."

With hopes to eventually build squash courts on campus, Coach Vehslage made the point that "travel time

The varsity girls' fencing team, led by captains Kate Northrop (VI) and Katie Vella (V), ended its strong season with an impressive record of 13-5.

The season culminated in a great performance at both the semi-final NJSIAA

"Sweet 16" Team Championships and the NJSIAA Squad State Championships.

Northrop described the team as "a force to be reckoned with," adding that the team has, without a doubt, gotten closer this year. "If there's one thing I know the team hears me say, it's to have fun.

Yes, hard work and dedication gets results, but don't forget why we fence in the first place! I'm dearly going to miss everyone on the team next year," Northrop said.

According to Head Coach Mr. Theodore Li, the team's accomplishments can also be attributed to both returning players and new freshmen. Coach Li mentions that foilist Aubrey Molloy (III) and saberist Jessica Li (III) are strong contributors to the team.

Molloy describes her captains as "extremely supportive and encouraging." She said, "Our team would be nowhere without our great captains. We are so lucky to have them this year."

BOYS' BASKETBALL

8-12

This year's boys' basketball team finished with a hard-fought 8-12 record. Doug Lachenauer (VI), Thomas Foreman (VI), and Drew Gagnon (V) led the squad this season.

The team, particularly the younger members of the team, improved a great deal over the course of the season. Freshmen Mike Weber and Phito Jean-Louis were often given the chance to start in games.

Coach Jason Murdock said, "I was proud of the effort and commitment the guys showed me all season. Even though that was not reflected in our record, they showed great improvement."

The basketball team is graduating five seniors: Sam Schuman, Austin Schmidt, Doug Lachenauer, Alec Kirmsner and Tom Foreman.



L.J. Davidson (IV) looks for an open teammate.

Courtesy of Pingry Communications



M. Horn (III) looks to pass the ball to C. Curnin (III).

Courtesy of Pingry Communications

Swimming, Ice Hockey, and Track Wrestle Victory From Opponents

By: JENN KORN (IV),
EDWARD JOHNSON (IV),
CHRISTINA COSTA (V),
SHRUTI SAGAR (III)

GIRLS' ICE HOCKEY 1-15

With a final record of 1-15, the Girls' Varsity Ice Hockey team had a productive season. Led by captains Bella Walton (VI), Kacey Weiniger (VI), and Emma Engel (VI), and coached by Mr. Sean McAnally and Ms. Caroline Burke, the team improved as they faced the tough competitors in their bracket.

At the end of the season, the team traveled to Pittsburgh for the championship tournament. In the games, the team scored multiple goals and held their own in the bracket of Women's Interscholastic Hockey League of the Mid-Atlantic.

Coach McAnally was very proud of the team's performance this season. He noted that each member of the team had an opportunity to play in every game, which allowed the skating abilities of each player to dramatically improve. "The girls' hockey program is a great opportunity for the girls to learn and grow as players," he said.

Looking back on the season, Assistant Coach Burke said, "The hockey team had a great season full of hard work, road trips, and a lot of enthusiasm. The players improved significantly, both individually and as a unit, over the course of the season."

Reflecting on her time on the team, Engel said, "We may not have had an ideal record this year, but I am so proud of how much we improved and how close we became as a team. I couldn't have asked for a better way to end my Pingry ice hockey career."

As the season draws to a close, the team views their overall performance as a success and cannot wait to get back on the ice next winter.

BOYS' ICE HOCKEY 5-14-1

Despite having a record of 5-14-1, the boys' ice hockey team is optimistic about doing well next year. In spite of the losing record, Coach John Magadini said, "Everyone is working hard. Every practice they all come out, and they work hard. Every game we play they play hard, and they never ever give up, and I am really proud of these guys."

With a team consisting of only four upperclassmen, the team has struggled against many bigger and older teams this year. Forward Matthew San Miguel (IV) said, "Our record doesn't show our effort. We have played a lot of close games, and overall we are all focusing on getting better as a team so we can come out and have big year next season."

Although struggling after the captain and only senior, Jamie Smith (VI), got injured, the younger and less experienced players were able to step up and help to win the last few games in the season. Smith said, "Things look very good for the future because all of the younger guys are getting a lot better every day."

The team recently lost in the first round of the Skyland Conference tournament but it hopes to start next season on a better note.

BOYS' SWIMMING 8-3

Boys' swimming ended a strong season with a record of 8-3. Setting three records at the Skyland Conference Championships, the team

was very successful and was considered for All-American status in all three rounds.

Captains Kamau Holston (VI) and Anthony Wang (VI) led the team. Wang said, "We had a hard schedule, with most of the teams we swam against ranked above us. We had a deep lineup up this year; part of it was due to the strong freshman class that we received and the other part was due to how hard everyone worked to be better."

Jamie Finnegan (VI), who had a stellar individual season, was named an Athlete of the Week by NJ.com, following his performance in the state tournament.

Another standout member of the team was Sebastian Lutz (VI), who set three records individually at the championships. Breaking times in the 50-meter free-

and unexpected," but he is very happy with his overall performance.

The success enjoyed by the entire team was apparent when they placed second at both Counties and Preps. The team also received their eighth consecutive State Championship title. Jamie Parker (IV) reflected, "we started off slow but then everyone really began working together as a team and we started pumping out wins."

Even though the team has five graduating seniors, the underclassmen look forward to carrying on this year's success to next season.

GIRLS' SWIMMING 5-6

The girls' varsity swim team ended the season with a record of 5-6. Led by captain Lily Graff (VI) and head

had a ton of freshmen join the team this year, which really helped us balance out our meet lineups."

The swim team was very strong this year, with swimmers in various grades and levels of experience that contributed to their recent successes.

Graff was pleased with the performance of her team, stating that "we have had a lot of close meets that have come down to the fourth and fifth place finishes, which shows how much we needed everyone's efforts."

The girls' varsity swim team beat Oak Knoll in the state finals, defending the state title and then proceeded to the NJSIA Meet of Champions.

Ingrid Shu (V) placed second in the 50-Yard Freestyle and the 200-Yard Freestyle

BOYS' WRESTLING 4-14

The boys' varsity wrestling team, led by captain Hunter Conti (VI) and coach Mr. Mark Facciani, had a shaky season, finishing with a 4-14 record. The team faced multiple setbacks due to injuries and illnesses.

"Our record was not the dream record we set out for, yet we firmly believe we've made multiple strides this season," Conti said. The team trained hard during every practice. Conti added, "The intensity of our practices, our effort on the mat, and technical prowess in competition has been steadily increasing."

The team ended the season with a bright outlook for the future. "The time and effort we put in this year will pay off in future seasons and has created a mentality that will foster future great teams," Conti said. Despite its losses, the team had strong individual performances throughout the season.

WINTER TRACK

The winter track team has ended yet another very solid season. The team was led by captains Emma Palmer (VI) and Sydney Streicher (VI) and was coached by Mr. Timothy Grant.

The team, on average, attended meets every two weeks. The team is divided into three sections: sprinting, long distance, and field. The long distance runners worked on endurance, while the sprinters focused primarily on speed and agility. Field athletes competed in throwing and jumping events.

Palmer said that she will miss the team as her final season comes to a close, but believes that the team will continue to be successful next season.



A.J. Bernstein (IV) opens up for a pass from his teammates. Courtesy Pingry Communications

style, 100-meter freestyle, and 100-meter butterfly, Lutz said these new records were "a little unusual

coach Ms. Judy Lee, Graff said, "for a team that is traditionally small in size, we

and 400-Yard Freestyle relay teams placed sixth and seventh, respectively.



L.J. Davidson (IV) looks for an open teammate.

Courtesy of Pingry Communications



B. Miller (V) pins down an opponent.

H. Park (V)