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ISSUE 4

PANTHER PRINT

PG. 8
FAST FASHION'S
THREAD IN SOCIETY



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LETTERS FROM THE CO-EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

As this school year comes to a close, I would like to thank the newspaper staff and our adviser for the hard work we've put in throughout the entire year. As for our readers, thank you for your open and constant support; we appreciate all of your input and comments on the past issues. For seniors, enjoy the summer before college or any other plans you may have. For underclassmen, enjoy the summer while it lasts and I hope to see you all next year. I'm honored to come back next year with the ever-so dedicated Varsha Jhanak and Aveesa Bhayani. Made with love and determination, I hope you enjoy our final issue as a little summer gift.

Newspaper has been an integral part of my high school career throughout my journey. The experience had its highs and lows, but the highlight of my time will always be spending time with the bright individuals in the class and working on design. Being able to work with higher-end programs and seeing my creations come to life was amazing. Although I'll miss it, I'm ready to move forward to the next part of my life and pass down my role to my talented and favorite underclassman, Varsha Jhanak. Thank you to everyone who has picked up these newspapers to either look at or read; your support means a lot.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editor,

I enjoyed reading Prom: Night to Remember. It highlights one of the most important nights in a high schoolers life. I liked how you discussed the plans leading up to the event and all the details that went into it to make everyone feel included. The story was very informative and it tells the story of one of the biggest events of senior year, leading up to the end of a four year journey.

- Brianna Becerra, 12

MISSION STATEMENT

At Panther Prints, our mission is to serve as a connection between the Plano East student body and surrounding communities. Through inspiration and high-quality content, Panther Prints offers diverse coverage, passionate writing, relatable stories and a unique point of view. Our credible sources allow an in-depth experience that appeals to both the public and the individual. Our publication offers an informative and distinctive outlook on current interests.

DIGITAL MEDIA POLICY

We, at the Panther Prints, commit to responsibly utilize all of our media platforms to unite and inform the student body. We strive to create original content and attribute credit to all sources. We require our staff to uphold these values and to accurately report the news to the student body and community.

All student polls were conducted through
Google Forms and shared through social media

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Puzzled Panthers

By Kayla Vu

Is graduation mandatory to attend?

It is not mandatory to attend graduation but it's highly encouraged to do so. If a student is unable to attend graduation, they will still be able to receive their diploma over the summer. The Monday after the graduation ceremony, times and dates will be posted as to when students will be able to receive their diploma.

"[Graduation] is a grand affair," Principal George King said. "The excitement leading up to it is a lot of fun for the seniors and the families. It's one of those events that you look back and say, 'that was a lot of fun and I'm glad I did that.'"

Do we need to go to school even if we're exempt from final exams?

For students who qualify for exemption from exams, attendance is still mandatory. However, these students do not need to attend their class but can instead check-in into the gym. There, students can visit with each other and do recreational activities.

"That is a district requirement," King said. "We try to make it as painless as possible, but it is an attempt to reach a district standard for attendance. For those who have earned exemption, we'll house you in the gymnasium. It's a time to savor the last few days of your senior year."

Are there class reunions?

Class reunions can happen but it's down to the responsibility of the former students of that graduating class to organize one. The school district keeps a record of graduates so that graduates organizing a class reunion can have access to all the contacts of their classmates.

Class of '24 Senior Officers Step Up

By Sumayya Ali

As the 2023 school year comes to an end, the senior officers for the class of '23 step aside to allow the next school year's officers to step up. From IB students to Senate members, the senior officers for the class of '24 are excited for their senior year.

"I [want] to make sure I capture a lot of good memories," historian Mira Chary said. "I think that [it's] really important through photography to capture good memories and to keep those [memories] safe. What I really want to focus on is making sure that people [are having] a good time and are able to take home pictures."

Chary's love for photography and desire to make her senior year memorable prompted her to run for historian. Her position requires her to document and photograph the senior class of '24 throughout the year. With Chary and two other officers being in the IB program and three other officers not, the senior class of '24 offers a variety of perspectives.

"I think it's a really good thing that there's an equal [number] of people in IB and an equal [number] of people who are not in IB," Chary said. "It brings [the] group together, but it's [also] a very balanced group. [At] the end of the day, we all have a really good work ethic."

The equal division allows for different perspectives and potentially new ideas.

"I want to have more inclusive events, that include AP, IB and all kids that are in different grades," treasurer Sanjana Arulkumaran said. "Since we have the IB program in ninth and 10th, I think it would be really cool to have some activities that included them and [maybe] the juniors as well."

The senior officers' positions require them to bridge the gap between students and staff as well as plan senior events to make the year memorable. The officers work with event coordinators, school staff and students to ensure every event runs smoothly and meets all district requirements.

"My [role] mostly is working with other officers and [ensuring] everyone is communicating," secretary Abigail Ipina said. "The senior officers are meant to be like a gateway for the administrators and students. Our role is to inform the administrators about the students so that they are more aware of what is going on in our lives at East."

Events such as Prom and Senior Sunrise are organized by the student council. Prom includes finding a location and determining a decorative theme all while staying within the budget. Senior Sunrise is an event where students gather together in the school parking lot to watch the day begin.

"I really want to talk to people so I can get to know what everyone is interested in," Ipina said. "That way students get to be more involved in the planning and can pitch in ideas so that everyone has the best experience at prom."

Senior year is the final goodbye to countless friends and memories, and these seniors are ready to make it memorable.

"[My role] is making sure that there are projects [and] events that make the year festive and exciting for the seniors," president Ryann Nelson said. "I want to make the [senior class] feel like a family."



Photo from Unsplash

Anti-LGBTQ+ Bills Surge

By Maryam Ahmed

The volume of anti-LGBTQ+ bills swelled in the last year with a record 315 bills being proposed in the United States, according to the Human Rights Campaign. These bills target not only healthcare in relation to the LGBTQ+ community, but also how sexuality and gender identity are approached in an educational setting. The impacts of these laws span the nation, but are felt by the LGBTQ+ community at the state and local levels as well.

"This is a matter of human lives, especially with increasing violence towards LGBTQ+ people," sophomore Ishika Kothari said.

A common trend in legislation towards LGBTQ+ people includes limits on the recognition of someone's sexuality or gender identity. According to NPR, some states, such as Kansas, have bills on the floor that would prevent transgender individuals from changing their gender on their birth certificate or driver's license. In March, Arkansas passed a law restricting transgender people from entering bathrooms not aligned with their sex assigned at birth in the interest of comfort for cisgender people, or people whose gender aligns with their sex assigned at birth, according to PBS News.

"People can't make an impact until they feel comfortable in their own bodies," junior Riley Sparks said. "If that right is taken away from some people, it can lead them down a bad path."

This pattern is also prominent at the state level, with a bill on the Texas House floor that would limit health care to transgender people, according to the Texas Tribune. As of April 4, this bill, if passed, would now prevent people already getting hormone

therapy from receiving further care.

"Stopping gender-affirming care midway through the process doesn't allow for people to fully transition into what they want to be, which can mentally and physically damage them," Kothari said.

On both the state and national levels, anti-LGBTQ+ laws make their way into education as well. For instance, Texas Governor Greg Abbott toured several private Christian high schools across the state in his critique of the way sexuality and gender identity are taught in public schools, according to the Dallas Morning News. Although the majority of people who identify as religious support non-discrimination laws, according to the Center for American Progress, religion is the most cited argument in favor of anti-LGBTQ+ laws.

"People in the closet don't feel comfortable around other people, even their own parents, and these laws create the view that if they come out, they will get hate-crimes," Sparks said. "They don't feel valid enough to come out."

Pending education bills across the nation mirror those being debated in Texas. For example, Florida passed a bill in 2022 dubbed the "Don't Say Gay" bill by critics that would ban education on sexual orientation in kindergarten through third grade in favor of parental rights, which give parents control over how sexuality and gender identity are taught to their children. Similar bills are being debated in Arkansas and Missouri legislatures.

"[These laws] create this anti-LGBTQ+ sentiment in a lot of classrooms and schools, which leads to an increase in violence towards these people," Kothari said. "In all directions, these laws impact teenagers."

Although many of these anti-LGBTQ+ laws are still being debated in their respective legislatures, the sentiment that accompanies them flows to the social level, down to individual perspectives and interactions.

"The influence of political figures have such a big impact on someone's individual thoughts to the point that it's not even [their] own thoughts," Sparks said. "It's just someone telling [them] what they think is wrong and right, and then just going along with it."

Student Opinion on Laws Restricting the Teaching of Sexuality, Gender Identity

43% of students think these laws have a very negative impact on students

19% of students think these laws somewhat negatively impact students

9% of students think these laws have no impact on students

7% of students think these laws have a very positive impact on students

6% of students think these laws have a somewhat positive impact on students

16% of students chose not to comment

**out of 323 students polled*

Road to Retirement

By Michelle Mendez-Arreaga

After years of dedicating their lives to help pupils prosper not only as students, but as individuals, French teacher Pauline Sinnamon and principal George King announced their retirement. For nearly 45 years, Sinnamon educated students to success. Additionally, King worked in the education field for the past 40 years and led the school for the last 10 years. Along the way, the two changed the school's history.

"I will miss everybody, but this is the right time to make the move," Sinnamon said.

Sinnamon started as a long term substitute teacher at Williams High School. The teacher she was substituting for eventually returned back to school, but Sinnamon wanted to continue educating students in the district as her passion for teaching grew stronger.

"Plano East was going to be built, so I applied for the job to come here," Sinnamon said. "My first year here, I taught all the levels of Spanish and French. We had a very small population of about 600 students; it was a very tight group."

Every year since the early 2000s, Sinnamon's students have gone to the Texas French Symposium, a statewide competition for high school students learning French. Several of her students have won first place at the contest, earning themselves a trip to the prestigious language school Concordia in Minnesota. Attending the contest yearly with her students is one of Sinnamon's highlights of her career. Interactions with the students is her favorite part of the job, especially when they discuss something they've read, get excited about an idea, or explain something in French.

"I'm proud of my students when they do well at the contest," Sinnamon said. "There are a number of plaques up on the wall outside that represent how hard the students worked. It's always a team effort. I will miss the students, our staff and administration team, they're my work family. I hope we can all stay in touch outside of school."



Photo by Michelle Mendez-Arreaga

French teacher Pauline Sinnamon and principal George King pose for a photo together on May 5.

After 10 years of leading students at the school, King will be leaving the school as well as a result of his retirement. Before becoming principal, King worked at various other schools in the state. His first teaching job was at Alief Elsik High School in Houston. He worked as a teacher at Williams High School and Vines High School. He then returned to Williams High School as an assistant principal and continued working in this position at Frankford Middle School. King then became principal at Bowman, McMillen and then finally transferred here. Being in the education industry gave King the opportunity to engage students in learning and the capacity to lead adults in the teaching community. He considers any opportunity to interact with a student as a great success and memory.

"I wanted to be a teacher since I was in high school because I wanted to be like a couple of my social studies teachers I had back then," King said. "Being the Plano East principal is [the] pinnacle of any principalship I've had. I enjoy speaking and building relationships with students, staff, parents and the community."

There's been many changes since King's start of principalship. Many individuals were affected by the pandemic, including principal King; the school became more and more difficult to manage.

"As laws and policies change, people usually become for and against those laws and policies. The challenging part is trying to lead people through those changes," King said.

Nevertheless, King continued to lead students and staff with class. His inspiration to do so was his determination to give back to the community. After retiring, King plans on writing a book and mentoring future teachers. He will miss the relationships he made with the people he met in the last years during his journey to principalship.

"Plano East is the setter of the East Plano Community," King said. "We are all very fortunate to have been a part of this Plano East experience. We wanna make sure that we do everything we can to spread east side pride, to continue the motto of winning with class and to continue to celebrate the diversity of our student population."

PANTHER PROFILE

Taking Initiative to Inspire

By Maryam Ahmed

On a sweltering summer day, the sun mercilessly beats down on the familiar Bob Woodruff Park. An enthusiastic, teenaged crowd of 150 people still dare to venture out despite the blistering heat, all in the name of serving the community and cleaning up a beloved park. Under the glare of the sun, this motivated group of high schoolers spend the day filling up trash bag after trash bag, leaving serene, tranquil greenery behind them. This kind of sight is a familiar one for senior Kripa Kannan, who organizes many service events through the school. Through her leadership positions in numerous service clubs such as Key Club, Next Generation Nations (NGN), and UNICEF, she is able to advocate for a variety of causes at the local level.

"I feel like [Kannan] is the gateway in our school for connecting to the community," senior Sana Shahid said. "She's allowed so many students to realize their passion for volunteering."

From coordinating donation drives to hosting park cleanups, Kannan spent her high school career trying to make a difference in the community. Beyond the basic organization of her projects, Kannan ensures each event makes a lasting impact.

"She would be involved in every organization if she could," Student Senate teacher Erica Johnson said. "She's really good about leveling everything out and making sure everything gets done up to the standard that she wants it done."

Kannan also has experience promoting her causes at the national level. After a rigorous application process, she attended the Building Hope Mental Health Strategy Summit on behalf of UNICEF in Washington D.C. this past November.

"I got to meet mental health advocates from around the country, and that was super eye-opening," Kannan said. "It was really cool that they wanted to hear a youth perspective, because they're talking about youth mental health and

in India, they had to walk so far to get water and they survived on one meal a day," Kannan said. "I think their hard work in immigrating here and coming to college here really inspired me to continue their work and pay it forward to those who are less fortunate than me."

Kannan plans to continue her parents' work into college and beyond, weaving together healthcare, technology and business in her efforts to continue serving on an international scale.

"I really want to study abroad and go, not to the typical areas, but to underserved communities in third world countries to see what kind of medical technology they need there," Kannan said. "I want to spend my career creating healthcare technology that's accessible and affordable."

Although Kannan has her sights set high, she has her feet on the ground, concentrating her short-term efforts on making tangible impacts where she can at this stage of her life.

"Because [Kannan] is in such top leadership positions, she's able to collaborate with more groups, and because of that we've been able to get more promotion," Shahid said. "People are noticing what [these service clubs] do, and I find it really cool to see more activism in our school in general."

Over the course of her high school years, Kannan has watched her tireless labor come to fruition in the form of service-minded classmates and a reinvigorated community spirit.

"Seeing people come out and support my service really inspires me and motivates me to keep doing what I'm doing," Kannan said. "I think that's just all the support I need."



Photo by Sreya Chadalavada

Senior Kripa Kannan volunteers at the Feed My Starving Children Service Opportunity on March 13.

we need youth representation if we're talking about something youth-related."

Mental health alongside equal access to education is one of Kannan's keynote issues. Although she now spends time on Capitol Hill promoting these causes, her current dedication has humble beginnings in her parents' upbringing.

"When [my parents] were in poverty

Fast Fashion's Thread in Society

By Aveesa Bhayani, Sydnie Grayson and Varsha Jhanak

In recent years, the fast fashion industry grew and was valued at \$1002.3 million in 2022. With the rise of social media, many turn to fast fashion for affordable, yet trendy pieces. The industry attracted criticism as well, with many questioning its ethics due to accusations of pollution, worker exploitation and animal testing. The market is expected to grow to \$173,899.99 million by 2026 and is then expected to reach \$240,530.09 million in 2031.

"No one really considers the outlooks of [fast fashion] and it's easy to get," senior Isabelle Nguyen said. "It's honestly everywhere and people don't notice. Maybe they consider the consumers that are buying it, but not the people behind the scenes, working and doing hard labor without getting paid. You have to think about the child labor and how they're making it and shipping it there."

Unraveling Fast Fashion

Fast fashion is the idea of promoting fashion trends by producing clothes at a high rate in order to match supply with demand. First promoted in the 1990s, fast fashion started as a way to appeal to the masses with cheaper clothing while still keeping up with the trends, such as oversized shirts, low-waisted jeans and mini skirts.

"[I purchase fast fashion] probably for cost purposes because it's easier to afford," junior Carina Kenefick said. "That's the main reason, otherwise I try to find other options. Instead of finding fast

fashion options, I try to limit what I get and buy from more sustainable places."

With social media becoming more and more popular, the younger generation tends to follow trends on TikTok and Instagram, where influencers post about their 'clothing hauls' from places such as Romwe and Shein. Popularized

"I try not to [consume fast fashion] but I also have the privilege of not doing it. It's really unrealistic to say that everyone should be finding other options because that's not something that everyone can do."

- junior Carina Kenefick

during the COVID-19 pandemic, Shein surprised those at home with its price as it was cheap and only came within two weeks of ordering. Its popularity also stemmed from its size and inclusivity.

"Now you have all these influencers who have brand deals with certain companies and are selling it and people want to be like them," Technical Theater teacher Caroline Kinnamore said. "That's how advertising works, but it feels more on a personal level than it has in the past. Seeing someone you've followed for a long time promoting something is going to be different than seeing an ad pop up on a website or a commercial."

After being coined as "affordable," fast

fashion's upward climb began and has not stopped as the online shopping industry continues to grow. Over the past 30 years, according to the United States Census Bureau, e-commerce sales have been steadily increasing with a surge due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With this growth, micro trends emerge as fashion changes over time. According to Rolling Stone Magazine, other trends, such as 'dupes,' a term for knock-off versions of high quality items, have taken over the fashion world as higher quality fashion companies, such as Prada and Chanel, are being pushed out in exchange for fast fashion companies, promoted by social media influencers.

"That's why people like to buy fast fashion, they want to be hip and trendy which is good," junior Krrish Parrekh said. "I always appreciate a trendy look, but social media just provides a lot of outlets and ways that you can purchase fast fashion without even knowing it."

Positives vs. Negatives of Fast Fashions

Fast fashion gained popularity for a number of reasons. To begin with, fast fashion is extremely profitable for manufacturers. Unlike traditional retailers, fast fashion retailers can roll out new styles and quickly respond to customer demand, all at a fraction of the cost allowing the cost for consumers to be low. In addition, fast fashion allows consumers to buy affordable, on-trend pieces with a wide selection of styles and

sizes adding to its appeal. Consumers can keep up with trends but won't spend tons of money as fast fashion makes trendy clothes accessible for consumers.

"[The manufacturer] is making a lot of money because they're probably producing these things for pennies and selling it for an affordable price but a pretty significant profit," Kinnamore said. "Because [the industry] moves so fast, it's able to keep up with trends."

However, fast fashion is criticized for a number of reasons including its large environmental effect. Fast fashion products are made of relatively cheap, low-quality material which makes it last for a short time leading to the frequent disposal and subsequent repurchasing of clothing. According to a study from Princeton, 57% of all discarded clothing ends up in landfill. This vicious cycle leads to pollution and landfills of piles of clothing. On top of this, the shipping of goods also releases tons of carbon emissions.

"I want clothes that last a long time and fast fashion promotes wastefulness," Parrekh said. "Someone will buy something for five dollars because it's so inexpensive. If they don't like it, they'll just throw it away, whereas if you buy that same piece and it's a good quality one, you're not going to want to throw it away. When you throw it away, all the manual labor that went into that just goes to waste."

In addition, fast fashion is associated with exploitative labor practices. According to Fashion United, the fast fashion industry employs approximately 75 million factory workers worldwide. According to a publication sponsored by the George Washington University Law School's International Law Society, less than two percent of these workers make a living wage. The industry also uses child labor due to its low-skilled nature, causing child exploitation. The industry promotes an unhealthy work schedule with garment workers working 16 hours a day and seven days a week. According to the non-profit organization, Remake, the production of fast fashion clothing employs the use of 8,000 synthetic chemicals which are known to cause cancer to workers.

"A lot of people have brought aware-

ness to the working conditions but I don't think they understand the extent of it," Parrekh said. "There's a lot of child labor that goes into this because fast fashion is usually purchased from less developed countries. They use children and people of all kinds of lower class populations who are forced to work. Promoting that is also an ethical concern because of course we don't want that."

Student Opinion on Ethics of Fast Fashion

27% of students see an issue with fast fashion and don't purchase clothes that are fast fashion

26% of students see an issue with fast fashion but continue to purchase clothes that are fast fashion

21% of students don't see an issue with fast fashion but don't purchase clothes that are fast fashion

10% of students don't see an issue with fast fashion and continue to purchase clothes that are fast fashion

16% of students chose not to comment

***out of 323 students polled**

Guessing Games: Runway of Ethics

As a match; a style may burn bright in the moment, but when it is gone, the consumer is forced to find other options. What fast fashion lacks in quality, they make up for in efficiency and affordability. The 'grab and go' concept of the industry appeals to consumers in the form of trendy clothing meant to die out within months, at which point it will be promptly replaced with the 'next best thing.'

"I have bought things that were non-expensive, and then they didn't last," English teacher Nora Gutierrez Perez said. "They bled or I'll get something cheap

for a trip and I'll get a hole in it. I also think 'well I wonder how many people had their hands on this that didn't get paid very well' and well it didn't last anyway so what was the point of that?"

From the hands of poor laborers to big corporations, the use of minorities for labor allows companies to capitalize on cultural appropriation, an expression of culture from one that is not from the cultural source. Clothes that display colorful embroidery and patterns from indigenous peoples can be unethical, putting independent indigenous businesses at a disadvantage.

"When I see things and say 'oh look that looks like something I can get right across the border' and I look at the tag and it's not made in Mexico, it's made somewhere else," Perez said. "I can get something from an actual artisan right across the border and the money will go directly to them."

While small cultural businesses are sustainable, they are not always affordable. Many people find themselves turning to fast fashion as an alternative. Another alternative however, is donation. This is a way to get more clothes more readily available for those who rely on second hand clothes or cheap substitutes.

"I try not to [consume fast fashion] but I also have the privilege of not doing it," Kenefick said. "That's not the only source I rely on. It's really unrealistic to say that everyone should be finding other options because that's not something that everyone can do. I think the biggest thing that students can do is avoid overconsumption because that's a big issue that contributes to it."

In an array of moving parts, the fashion industry has nothing but options, but a sustainable option may not necessarily be to focus money elsewhere but to invest it.

"Purchase for longevity; I feel like that's the advice I would give people that don't necessarily have as much disposable income to spend on clothes and fashion," Parrekh said. "Really ask yourself if you're going to be able to wear a piece of clothing and if it's going to be good quality before you buy it."

Staying on Track

By Kayla Vu

As the blazing sun scorches the field, small droplets of sweat form on junior Angel Ngadi's forehead. With a confident step, she takes foot into the ring while the 8.8 pound ball hangs heavy in her hands. Rolling her shoulders back, Ngadi gets into position, preparing for the shot put event. The intense anticipation of the crowd dissipates from her mind and with a stretch, she throws.

"This year, I truly started to appreciate and enjoy [shot put]," Ngadi said. "When you get into the ring and step into it, in order to throw, you need to clear your mind because there's a whole bunch of people around. That minute I'm in the ring is the clearest time of my entire life. It just gives me joy."

This season, multiple students advanced to regional championships: senior Janiya Richardson, senior Tristan Martin, junior Jaylon Hatcher, junior Ezra O'Neal III, senior Quincy Baggett and senior Doriyan Marshall. From these students, Hatcher, Marshall, Baggett and O'Neal all competed together in the 4x200 Relay event as a team and placed first in the Region I-6A Championships, qualifying for State Championships.

"I got faster from start to finish," junior Jaylon Hatcher said. "I've always done [track]. I started it in middle school and I thought it was fun so I kept doing it. [Going to] Texas Tech, making it to the finals and Area and getting first place at district for the full run [was the highlight of the season]."

Track and field, often confused with cross country, is a sport where players compete on flat-surfaced tracks while cross country includes players running over natural terrain. There are 44 various events players can participate in with the main categories being sprints, hurdles, relays, middle and long distances, race

walks, marathons, jumps and throws. Although each event requires different skill sets, each member of the team needs to work hard to achieve their goals.

"Track is really interesting [because] it's a team sport made up of individual performances," Head Girls' Track and Field coach Robert Reed said. "Every-

Head Boys' Track and Field coach Jonathan Bannister both work together to guide students through their practices.

"We're almost like a combined program when we help each other out," Reed said. "I have all the distance runners [and] coach Banister oversees all the hurdlers. We have coaches as well that coach both boys and girls. It's not like a boys and girls team separate; it's just one track and field program."

Outside of after school practice the team usually has, members like Ngadi spend additional time preparing for meets. For Ngadi, she personally improves her performance through video recording herself and studying the form of professionals. Other track members take on similar mindsets with many players altering their diets or doing more exercise outside of their after school training.

"There's been some rough paths here and there, but [the track season] has been progressing [well]," Ngadi said. "The process is learning to stay patient and learning how to communicate with each other. To overcome these struggles, we communicate with our coaches and our teammates, asking them what we could do to see our progress go from practice to meets."

While track itself appears to be more individualized in the events the team competes in, many players are still able to find a team

to have fun and share memories with.

"We're all close with the way we interact," Ngadi said. "It's like a sibling relationship. We argue with each other sometimes, but at the end of the day we still all love each other. Just watching everyone on the team and seeing everyone's progress to reach their goals [is the highlight]."



Photo by Tiffany Bush

Junior Jaylon Hatcher runs to his teammate, junior Matthias Bessey, for the Mens Varsity 4x400 Relay event at the district invitational on March 18.

one has their own specific individual events that they focus on but we're all out here working hard and they support one another. The understanding and respect that our teammates have for each other for their respective events is what makes our sport so special. Our performances have shown that they have not only grown as athletes but as people."

With several years of experience as head coach under their belts, Reed and



Varsity coach Thomas Joyce talks to the team during the state championship game against Memorial West on Jan. 29.

Photo by Steve Korner

Underdogs Rise to Become Back-to-Back State Champions

By Sydnie Grayson

As varsity hockey players hear the roar of the crowd at the State Championships, the nerves intensify as they prepare to compete in this high-energy competition. From the coaches' pep talks to the captain's last minute encouragement, the players hope that these words will help wash away their stress in hopes of advancing as far as they can. Each time they score, the crowd raises their arms in a chant, cheering on the team as they reach their season-long goal. In the season, there are separate competitions for the district level and the state level. Because of this, it is possible to win one competition and lose the other, which is exactly what the varsity team did. Although they did not advance in the semi-finals at the district level, the hockey team became the Texas State 2B Champions for the second consecutive year. After a long fight against Memorial West High School on Jan. 29, even diving into overtime, the team took their place as state champions.

"It hasn't been done in Plano East hockey," varsity senior Benjamin Hardy said. "It's been a pretty big deal for us, especially as seniors to leave such a big impact on the team. I joined the team in eighth grade, playing for [junior varsity] and the team has really transformed over the past four years."

According to Athlete Assessments, the team dynamic of a sport can affect the performance and success of that particular team. As for the hockey team, they rely heavily on how this team dynamic can positively or negatively impact them.

"It's definitely a little brotherhood," varsity captain senior Cade Willis said. "I've been on other teams and organizations throughout my life, but something about Plano East and the high school team makes it so everyone is really close. Whenever I played for other organizations, there's a lot of competitive nature going on, but you don't really feel that with your teammates in high school. Everyone works together."

The team consists of 18 players including goalies. Although most of the players on the team are from Plano East, the team allows students from other schools, such as Wylie High School and Wylie East High School to try out for the varsity and junior varsity teams. Along with this, middle schoolers are also allowed to try out for JV2.

"We have kids at McMillen and Williams and from Wylie," Willis said. "It's cool that we can bring everyone together from different school districts. Both of our goalies don't go to Plano East and they are a huge part of our team and they're both really good. Last year, our

captain was from Wylie. Without them, we definitely wouldn't be in the same spot that we've been in the past two years."

Aside from the environment of the team, they've also received a new coach in the past three years, Coach Thomas Joyce. The players give credit to him for pushing them to their goals and getting them to where they are today.

"Three seasons ago, we got a new coach," Willis said. "Before that coach came, Plano East was nowhere close to state championships or anything. He definitely turned things around and changed the culture of Plano East. He did that obviously because the past two years we've won state championships. Nobody three years ago would've expected that."

As a change in the course of the hockey team's accomplishments, the seniors reflect on their impact being on the team and contributing to the achievement of winning the state championships two consecutive years.

"Going back to back state championships was really a big deal for us," Hardy said. "The game ended in overtime so everyone had been really nervous and winning was a great feeling of triumph. I was super proud of my team and couldn't have been happier to win the championship."

Discrimination in Healthcare

Fight For Equality Continues

Staff Editorial

As the world shifts toward modern feminism, many women now stand at the foot of the wall that controls their medical future. In the 18th century, men dominated the medical field and its studies, leading to a world of unknowns regarding female health. The topic of inclusion of women in medical research only started during the women's health movement in 1970. Additionally, matters of the court dig their claws into the reproductive health of women. Ignorant discrimination in the healthcare industry continues to be a problem as professionals shift from male-dominated studies to a more female-inclusive approach, a little too late.

The disclusion of women in certain drug trials caused a plethora of unknown consequences for women for centuries. The University of Chicago showed a research study in which drug concentrations were higher in the bloodstreams of women. As a result of hormones, women are more sensitive to lower doses of a drug; twice as likely to experience negative symptoms or to become addicted. The same study shows 86 FDA-approved drugs proven to be dangerous to females such as birth control or certain opiates. In 2005, eight out of 10 drugs were then taken off the market for higher health risks towards females rather than males. Although the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) now requires female patients to be included in drug trials, more can be done to increase awareness. For example, labels should be provided on both over-the-counter and prescription medications on the recommended use based on weight, gender and

age. This can help prevent negative reactions and ensure equity in healthcare.

Additionally, the line between the separation of church and state blurs as both the government and male doctors make decisions about the female body. Bodily autonomy turns political as widespread debates about the topic find themselves on the ballot. As the rest of the world looks to the future, female

tions, but no female should ever be denied surgery simply based on personal beliefs.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), between 1-26% of women regret tubal ligation. This has even been seen to be linked to clinical depressive symptoms. Doctors are required to give an informed decision based on the facts, and while evidently, a lack of knowledge on the reproductive system is available, the surgery is nonreversible and therefore cautioned against. However, outside factors must be taken into effect such as illnesses or genetic diseases that may make it difficult to carry to term or an increased risk of cancer. Long-term birth control also has long-term negative effects, so a tubal ligation may be in the best interests of a majority of patients. Ultimately, the patients should be in charge of their reproductive health.

The medical world has been set back decades by the interference of men who believe they know best. The reality: the medical world was built and based on studies surrounding solely white men. While medical professionals have

years of experience prior to their employment in the field, it was less than 30 years ago that researchers began to regularly see female patients and it won't be for another 30 that we can start to see change in the medical world. In the meantime, it is advised that female patients should see female doctors and always seek a second opinion, health is the priority.

**The Panther Prints staff voted 7-0, with majority opinion believing that there's significant gender inequality in the way healthcare is provided in the U.S.*



reproductive rights take a peek into the past. Up to 70% of obstetrician-gynecologists (OBGYN) will attempt to dissuade a woman from permanent sterilization according to the Daily Free Press. A procedure called tubal ligation is an internal surgery for sterilization, similar to a vasectomy. Sources claim to be told they are "too young" or unmarried according to CNN. One source claims to have heard "every excuse in the book." Men in the medical field often use their medical expertise as a shield that justifies their ac-

Inadequacy of Mental Health Services in Texas Schools

By Varsha Jhanak

With exam season approaching, students have a lot on their mind. According to Sage Journals Review of Educational Research, 31% of students claim that finals are their main cause of stress. In these high pressure situations, many students find it helpful to go to trusted adults or mental health services at school. According to the National Association of School Psychologists, students who receive social-emotional, mental, and behavioral health support perform better academically, according to research. Most of these mental health services across the state are not adequate for students due to lack of funding and staffing.

According to CBS News, half of all Texas school districts have no school psychologist on their staff. In addition, these schools do not offer a telehealth option which does not require a student to be in person for services. In Texas, 593 school districts out of more than a 1000 have no school psychologist on staff and do not offer a telehealth option, according to CBS News' analysis of data from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This leaves more than half a million Texas kids without any mental health services in school. In the district, the ratio of psychologists to students is extreme, with one psychologist per every 2,906 students. According to CBS, each district should have 54 psychologists on the staff. With many schools not having counseling, students may not have anyone to talk to about their struggles. This lack of mental health staff also puts stress on the remaining staff, as they must

care for such a large number of students.

According to Texans Care for Children, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) did not receive any of the \$1.7 billion in general revenue that was distributed by the Legislature to 24 other state entities for the purpose of providing services for the prevention, intervention, and treatment of mental health issues or substance abuse. The Legislature additionally allows districts to utilize their School Safety Allotment (SSA), which is \$9.72 per student, to help understudy health, and wellbeing. However, the Texas School Safety Center discovered that only 12% of Texas school districts utilized any of those SSA funds. Resources are provided by the state but either these funds do not reach districts or districts do not make use of them. It is preposterous for districts not to use this funding for the benefit and wellbeing of their students. If students' mental health isn't being provided but funding available, students are being put in jeopardy.

It could be argued that students could access mental health professionals outside of school if necessary. However, this point isn't accessible to all students. Mental health services can be expensive. In Texas, a single therapy session can range from \$100-200. Students should have access to mental health services at school so every student has an equal chance. School should be a safe space where every student has an equal opportunity. In addition, the district can afford at least one therapist. However, by not providing mental health services to students, they

are put at a disadvantage. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, during their school years, one in five children and adolescents experience mental health issues. Stress, anxiety, bullying, family issues, depression, a learning disability, and abuse of alcohol and drugs are examples. All students deserve an equal opportunity

Students have lots to deal with and may need to talk to helpful adults. However, mental health services in schools are inadequate for students, they cannot receive the help they need due to a lack of funding and staffing. A Vistas Online article says that only 34% of school attackers had a mental health evaluation, and only 17% were diagnosed with a mental illness. On the off chance that locale guarantees their emotional wellness administrations for students are up to the mark, they might have the chance to avoid a portion of these tragedies. **If someone is struggling with mental health, text HOME to 741741 or call 988.**

87% of students have never talked to school counselors when they have mental health issues

Students Chose from 1 to 5 How Comfortable They Feel Talking to an Adult at School About Their Issues

26%

(the worst)

24%

23%

14%

5%

(the best)

8%

chose not to comment

1

2

3

4

5

*Both statistics are out of 323 students polled



Time, Money, Experience

Summer Jobs, Internships

By Sumayya Ali and Michelle Mendez-Arreaga

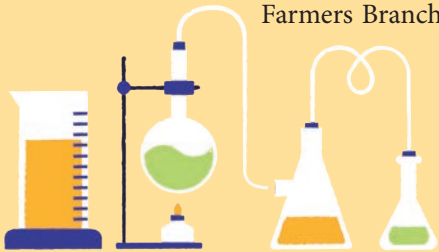
Whether students are looking for experience, money or simply a way to stay occupied during this break, finding a job suitable for summer can be tedious. For students who don't have time to search, here's a list compiled of potential internships and jobs available for this summer.

STEAMSPARK INTERNSHIP

16+ | No experience necessary | \$10-\$12 an hour | Part-time all summer | Can be applied for through Texas Jobs or ZipRecruiter

For something a little more flexible, the STEAMspark internship offers a variety of opportunities. The part-time job requires interns to teach young students a variety of subjects including science, technology, engineering, arts and math. Although it's a little further away, located in

Farmers Branch, TX, the job offers mentorship opportunities, paid time off and medical, dental and vision insurance.



BRIGHT HORIZONS FAMILY SOLUTIONS INTERNSHIP

18+ | Highschool diploma or GED | \$11.55 an hour | Full time | Can be applied for through Indeed, LinkedIn or directly through Bright Horizons Careers

For students looking for teaching experience, this internship teaches skills in the childhood field as well as leadership in the classroom. This eight-week internship requires interacting with peers and children, active participation in the kids' activities and cleaning the classroom. Located in Plano, this internship includes medical, vision and dental insurance.



CRAYOLA EXPERIENCE

14+ | No experience necessary | \$15-\$16 an hour | Can be applied for through Indeed and ZipRecruiter

For students not interested in internships, jobs at the Crayola Experience offer a more interactive and creative environment. Paying \$15 to \$16 an hour, the company prides itself on being able to work around students' busy schedules. No prior experience is necessary and the company offers various product discounts. The company is located in Plano and is hiring for a variety of different positions including receptionist, admissions team leader and entertainment and attractions guides.



UT SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL CENTER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

16+ | No experience necessary | Part-time | Negotiable salary

For another internship opportunity located in the medical field, UT Southwestern is offering a medical internship program. Students will be required to help with molecular biology experiments, assist staff in day-to-day operations and perform basic administrative functions. The temporary positions require no experience and all content will be taught to students participating in the program.



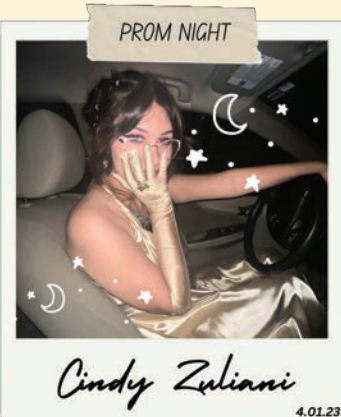
Class of 2023: Making Lasting Memories

By Michelle Mendez-Arreaga

As seniors move forward with their lives, they reflect on their accomplishments and the memories they have made throughout the last four years of high school. Students of the Class of 2023 shared some of their most memorable moments, future plans, and advice for underclassmen.

Coming from Florida during her junior year was not easy, but that didn't stop International Baccalaureate (IB) senior Cindy Zuliani from fulfilling her aspirations of getting into the clinical program. Zuliani is proud she's been able to stay in the IB program this long, as well as being able to take the Patient Care Technician exam to be certified to work in healthcare facilities. She suggests underclassmen work towards a goal, even if it seems impossible to accomplish.

"I didn't think I would be able to get into the clinical program, but I did," Zuliani said. "I plan on majoring in biomed at Texas A&M. After college I want to go to med school, hopefully for either forensic pathology or immunology. Have your mind set on something and work towards it."



As a member of senate and UNICEF, senior Don Tran constantly gave back to the community. One achievement he's especially proud of is fostering over 810 pounds of peanut butter for the local North Texas Food Bank.

"I was shocked that we were able to raise that much. If I could do something that big in my local area, I could do this in other areas and become a bigger leader."

Tran was nominated by the student senate to be part of the Homecoming court this school year. He saw this as an opportunity to represent Eastside spirit and pride. After high school, Tran plans on working in the business industry and traveling the world.

"When they announced I had won [Homecoming King] I was shocked, I never expected this to happen," Tran said. "In the future, I hope to be engaged in companies, make close relationships, and long lasting memories."

IB senior Akshay Unnikrishnan will be attending the University of Texas as a computer science major to study machine learning and front end web design. A highlight from his high school journey consisted of presenting his research at the Texas Junior Academy of Science fair. He also serves as a co-editor for Key Club and is part of the chamber orchestra. As he continues to move forward, he will treasure the memories he has made at school. Unnikrishnan advises students to enjoy their time in high school.

"I will miss the IB program specifically," Unnikrishnan said. "There's a really strong community in [IB]. I have close bonds with almost all of them, so I will be missing that." "Manage your time wisely, get good sleep, and don't stress about everything as much. Do whatever you enjoy and don't do everything for the sake of achievement."



Senior Kiran Gillani is a student in the HSA program, a member of the bowling team, and a member of the varsity softball team. Gillani plans on double majoring in criminal justice and biology. While she's excited to start a new chapter at college, she will miss the friends she's made during high school.

"One of my favorite memories is when the bowling team went to state and became state champions," Gillani said. "We barely made the cut to advance past the qualifying round. We came back around and we won it, it was insane."

During off-periods, she spends time with friends in the HSA supervisor's office.

"I am so used to having them around," Gillani said. "Thank you to everyone who has been in my life for the past few years."

| 2023 SENIOR GRADUATION | SATURDAY, JUNE 3 | 2:30 P.M. |

GRADUATION INFO

At Ford Center at the Star in Frisco, 9 Cowboys Way Frisco, TX 75034

TICKETS & ADMISSION

- Seating will be general admission.
- All guests **over the age of two years old** will be required to have a ticket for entry.
- Each graduate will receive **8 tickets** for guests.

TICKET PICKUPS

- Students must present a **photo I.D.** and sign for receipt of tickets.
- Tickets may be picked up on **May 26 at 1 p.m.**

*Alpha Sub School Students (A-E) | North Gym
door entrance off Panther Circle*

*Beta Sub School Students (F-L) | South Gym
Door entrance off Panther Circle*

*Gamma Sub School Students (M-RI) | North Caf-
eteria entrance (closest to Gamma Sub School)*

*Delta Sub School Students (Ro-Z) | South Cafete-
ria entrance (closest to Delta Sub School)*

- Graduation tickets not picked up by **Thursday, June 1 at 10 a.m.** will be offered for redistribution on a first come, first serve basis.
- Students wanting to pick up extra tickets will need to come to the East front office at **2 p.m. on June 1st.**
- Tickets will be given until they are all given out or at **3:30 p.m.** when ticket distribution and the front office will be closed.

OUTSTANDING FINES

Graduates will **NOT** be allowed to participate in the ceremony if they have any outstanding fines, fees, lost textbooks, uniforms, etc.

**FOR MORE INFO SCAN THE QR CODE
OR PULL UP THE LINK TO THE RIGHT**



GRADUATION PRACTICE

- All seniors are required to attend a graduation meeting on **May 25th** in the Auditorium
- Seniors that are exempt or do not have a class during the first two graduation practice times are allowed to come then
- Seniors will need to report to the gym to sign in and then go the auditorium.
- All others are to report after school at their as-
signed time.

9:15 a.m. during 5th exam

11:30 a.m. during 6th exam

**2:00 p.m. (All students that did not attend
earlier two sessions)**

