

## CONTENTS

Letters	2
News	5
Features	8
Sports	12



Delran High School

May 2021

# DHS Artists: Creativity and opportunities altered by pandemic

By ALEXIS MUNROE

## Staff Writer

Art is a creative outlet for students and some find a passion for it and seek opportunities in the artistic world.

Skye Jung, a junior at DHS, has had a passion for art ever since she was little. She is currently enrolled in AP Studio Art this year and was looking forward to showcasing and displaying her art as well as learning new things.

However, due to the coronavirus, there have been many setbacks. Since gatherings and events have been cancelled, students and artists are struggling to find opportunities to display their artwork.

Jung is interested in pursuing art in the future and is working on building her portfolio. She's always been creative and sees art as a way to express herself along with her overall style. With the pandemic restrictions, Jung said she's been able to focus more on her craft.

"I feel (being) at home has made making art more available to me," she said. "No longer being preoccupied with people constantly being around me gives me more time to think more creatively."

Although some students have a hard time dealing with online school, Jung looks at it as an opportunity for more creative thinking. However, one disadvantage she noticed is the difficulty in building a portfolio and finding motivation.

"Finding motivation is one thing, but also not having someone readily available to critique or give you pointers is also a disadvantage," she said.

In AP Art, Jung noted, there is a lot more creative freedom, but students are still learning, and they seek critiques on their work to grow as artists. Jung claimed that it is important to be with other artists and teachers,



*DHS junior Skye Jung is an AP Art student. Jung focuses on her art while the world is under quarantine restrictions. Photo courtesy of Skye Jung.*

she noted that remote learning has hampered some of her efforts.

"Because of this so many of us, including myself, aren't as ambitious or driven as we should be at this point of the year," she said.

As a subject that focuses on hands-on opportunities, the fine arts area has taken

an especially hard hit this year. Students learning in a virtual setting may struggle with collaboration or getting their hands on artistic supplies.

"We create things and a lot of the time, these are physical tangible things we create, and the inability to do that has been very difficult," said Phil Palumbo, a DHS art teacher.

The setbacks are hard, but it does not mean that creating art is impossible.

"Doing art at home is working, of course, it would be better if we were in school," Jung said. "I have done my best to keep up with artwork, and using social media as a way to promote my work."

# Letter from the Editor: Mixed emotions

Dear Readers,

Unfortunately, that month off in March 2020 never really ended so here we are, still in chains due to the pandemic. As journalists, this has been a difficult time to navigate in terms of figuring out what stories we want to tell. At *The Bear Facts*, we are passionate about writing, but more specifically we are passionate about writing the truth.

In this issue of *The Bear Facts*, we continue to tell the truth. That means covering the good and the bad situations that have occurred in light of the pandemic.

We highlight some creative minds that makeup the community here at DHS, but also bring up heavy topics such as the mental health of our students during these heartbreaking and unimaginable times.

Additionally, we shed light on some more unsung healthcare heroes and tackled the debate over transgender athletes and which gender they are permitted to play with.

Continuing with the theme of athletics, many writers took the opportunity to cover the spring sports season and what the school and coaches are doing for the sake of our athletes.

Every article this year seemed to be intertwined with COVID-19 because they were, and at times, this upset me deeply. So many pages of the paper that were meant to cover events such as homecoming, sports, the musical, were instead replaced with somber stories about how students are coping with this virus.

Who would have thought this is how the year would have gone?

As a senior and the Editor-in-Chief of *The Bear Facts*, I am both devastated and grateful. I am devastated that the pandemic took over our paper.

However, I am grateful for the opportunity that *The Bear Facts* gave me. In the most uneventful, yet simultaneously eventful year, I was not only there to report on the truth, but I had a vessel to share my voice and feelings with my community and for that I am so grateful.

I sincerely hope you enjoy this most recent edition, and remember that this nightmare cannot, and will not, last forever.

Sincerely,  
SERAFINA CAROLLO  
Editor-in-Chief

## Senior staff sign off: Alexis Munroe

By ALEXIS MUNROE

Staff Writer

High school is seen as the best four years for people, and after you are off to do bigger things, but when it's your senior year a few months from graduation, it sets in that it's over.

The people you'll see every year, your teachers, clubs, sports will soon be behind you. I'll miss the small hometown vibe of Delran, and how we are as a community.

I've also learned a lot with my four years at Delran High School, specifically about growth. In the beginning of my freshman year, I had many expectations of how my high school years would play out, and where I would be now. Those expectations didn't happen, and who I am now is a lot different than my perception of myself four years ago.

I did not expect the new friendships I made and the friendships I lost, the clubs, and sports I joined. I didn't think I would be active in the Delran community, but over my four years I learned to put myself out there, and enjoy what I have.

Especially this year, I learned to appreciate the small things like eating lunch with my friends outside, and the freedoms

*Continued on page 4*

## THE BEAR FACTS

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**Production Editor**  
Liza Clarke, 21

**Broadcast Manager**  
Drue Hamlet, 21

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## Senior staff member sign off: Liza Clarke

By LIZA CLARKE  
**Production Manager**

I never expected to fall in love with Journalism. As a freshman picking my classes for the next year, journalism just so happened to fit in my schedule. I never could have predicted the lasting impact it would have on my high school career.

The writing aspect alone is not what I fell in love with. I would like to thank Mrs. Sepesi for making this class a safe space for everyone. Writing for this newspaper has given me a chance to express creativity, frustration, and also hone my leadership skills. Even in such a dull, inconsistent year, Mrs. Sepesi somehow managed to be consistently optimistic and encouraging.

A special shout-out to Ms. Turse who introduced me to the art of journalism and guided me through my first year working on the newspaper.

Also, this class would not be possible if it weren't for my talented and hardworking classmates. Thank you for bouncing ideas around with me, peer editing my articles, and for making this class so enjoyable.

During my time in this class, I thoroughly enjoyed writing editorials. It was abundantly interesting and rewarding to be in touch with the cafeteria staff to shed light on the new pricing system last year.

Another fond memory was reporting on the Unified Sports that the school established last year. It was extremely heartwarming to see the

community come together to support our students. We have such a connected and interesting community which made it very edifying to report on and immerse myself within it these past three years.

As for the rest of my time in Delran Schools, I am infinitely thankful for all of my coaches, teachers, and classmates who have helped shape me into the person I am today.

Through the hardships of this year, *The Bear Facts* newspaper has remained focused and driven. This class's ability to be successful despite constant interruptions leaves me with no doubt in the future success of this publication.

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## Senior staff member sign off: Serafina Carollo

By SERAFINA CAROLLO  
**Editor-in-Chief**

I joined the school paper as a sophomore who simply "liked to write." Throughout the past three years on the paper and the past two as Editor-in-Chief, I was given an outlet to talk about topics that I am passionate about and I was able to educate my peers on social issues that I deemed important.

From my first story about Viola Desmond, the first woman on Canadian currency, to advocating for fair treatment of our female athletes, to educating others on "the R-word," to now having reported on the ups and downs of the pandemic, journalism gave me creative freedom and it gave me a voice.

It was always the class I looked forward to. As cliché as it sounds, I found a real passion in journalism. For the first time ever, I had found the thing that was mine. I had my answer when people asked, "What are you interested in? What's your favorite class in school?"

The class, the interviews, even the research was

so fun, until "Pandemic," "COVID-19," and "Coronavirus" were words in about every headline from last March to the present.

Heartbroken is an understatement. I'm angry, confused, in disbelief, and sad all at the same time. I so badly wish that this year had gone a different way, and my fingers are pretty much stuck together due to how long I've been crossing them, hoping that by next season we can resume with normality.

On a positive note, Ms. Turse gave me so much confidence as a new journalist and for that I am so grateful. Mrs. Sepesi has been an amazing mentor and friend who supported me and was there for me from the beginning. She made this class so fun, and made me feel like I had someone I could go to if I ever needed it, and with a year like this, I needed it. I am going to miss her. I'm so glad sophomore me took up journalism.

While I am not entirely sure about where the future takes me, I know that I want journalism to be a part of it. Congratulations to all my fellow graduating writers.

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## Senior staff members sign off: **Drue Hamlet**

Dear senior year,

You were the biggest pain in my butt. But, you also taught me so much.

This year has been a roller coaster of ups and downs. Struggling with mental health, motivation, college applications, two jobs, new friends, and on top of it all a global pandemic.

You better believe I was a mess. In fact, I am still a mess.

One of the things this year has taught me is how much I take for granted. While I do not have any major regrets, I wish I appreciated the little things before such a global disaster rained down upon my senior year.

I miss being in the overflowing hallways. I miss the smelly gym on Jumping Jack Fridays. I miss the crowded sports games with the bleachers filled with brown and gold fans. I miss the unpredictable craziness that we all call lunch period. I miss pep rally with the obnoxious chants, sweaty teenagers (weird, but true), and anticipation for who would be named the winner. I miss the smiles of my teachers, peers, and administrators.

Another thing this year has taught me: make the best of a crappy situation. I know I sound like a positive princess over here, but it really is true. If I wasn't able to appreciate all of the things we got to do this year,

rather than focus on all of the things we didn't, I would be even more miserable. Of course I am heartbroken over the things we missed out on, but I am content with the fact that we got through it together.

My obstacles and experiences including those as Class President, Senior Captain, Peer Leader, have ultimately shaped me into the young woman I am today. I am proud of myself for getting to this spot, and I would not have been able to do it without all of the people standing by my side.

My parents, my sister, my grandparents, my best friends, my teachers, my advisors, the administration, the Class of 2021, all deserve thanks for supporting me along this journey.

Thank you to Mrs. Sepesi who took me under her wing in Journalism these past two years. With this program, I was able to get a jist for what I would like to do in my future. Mrs. Sepesi has been one of my #1 fans and I cannot thank her enough for her dedication, love, and support.

I am planning on attending a four-year University somewhere down South. I would like to major in Broadcast Journalism with a focus in Sports Media.

Peace out,

Drue Hamlet

## DHS senior Alexis Munroe signs off

*Continued from page 2*

I have now. I learned about the passions I have and want to pursue in my future, like being politically active, and educating myself, and others.

A club I really enjoyed was Diversity Club. I joined my sophomore year through a friend and it opened my eyes to the struggles

people faced. I learned about different cultures and found a new interest in learning and appreciating other people's identities and cultures.

My senior year is not what I expected, but as I reminisce to who I was my freshman year, I'm proud of how DHS shaped me into a person with goals, and passions.

I'll miss my fellow classmates,

and friends, but I'll look back and cherish the memories, and opportunities I have. I'm excited for my next four years at college and the person I'm going to be.

Of course I have expectations of college, but I know some things will change, and although it's scary I'm excited for the next chapter.

## Congratulations to the Class of 2021!

## Maraldo's creativity comes from unique background

By LIZA CLARKE  
**Production Manager**

Paul Maraldo grew up surrounded by creativity. His father worked as a civil engineer and his brother grew up to become a chemical engineer.

"Growing up, we were always building and testing something in my house," said Maraldo, a teacher here at DHS. "One that comes to mind is our experiments with model rockets and building radio control airplanes and vehicles. We had a blast modifying designs and testing their capabilities. I wish we had the GPS tracking that is available now because we wouldn't have lost so many projects."

He continued on his path of creativity as he entered college, graduating from Kutztown University with a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts with a concentration in graphic design as well as a minor in craft, specializing in woods and sculpture. He then attended the University of the Arts in Philadelphia for graduate school. He has not yet earned his Master's, but has plans of earning this degree through online courses.

Entering college, Maraldo had aspirations of putting his creativity to use.

"I wanted to work for a large design firm in New York doing advertising, promotions, and product design, which I did after graduation by working at MTV, VH1, and Viacom," Maraldo said.

Maraldo has also worked to design toys for children.

"I loved working as a product design toymaker. We had the opportunity to design toys for large licensed brands like *SpongeBob Squarepants*, *Dora the Explorer*, *Fairly Odd Parents*, *Super Soakers*, *WWF* action figures, and educational art crafts," he said.

This position eventually led Maraldo to his current job - a teacher here at Delran High School.

"I started working exclusively on



*Paul Maraldo showcases his creative skills as he works on a project. Photo courtesy of Paul Maraldo.*

designing educational toys and that ultimately led me to teach. From design educational toys, I was fascinated with designing projects that help people learn. Teaching seemed like the next logical step, seeing how I could develop my skills in designing curriculum," Maraldo explained.

Maraldo currently teaches two electives at DHS; Do it Yourself and Introduction to Engineering. In normal circumstances, students in

these classes are able to utilize the school's FAB lab tools, which include the 3-D printer, laser printer, and others.

In a remote setting, students are working on perfecting the design process which will help them create when we return to school.

Senior Kenia Sanchez is a student in his Intro to Engineering class.

"Virtually he [Maraldo] is more independent. He assigns us our work and expects us to complete it, but he reassures us he's there if we need any help. I like how he can be very understanding when it comes to the amount of work he gives us and the amount of work our other teachers give us," Sanchez said.

Riley Cristella, a sophomore at DHS, has Maraldo as a teacher in her Do it Yourself course.

"I really like Mr. Maraldo. My favorite part of class is getting to make my designs come to life," she said.

Maraldo's career development has certainly been long, but he is very content with where this path has led him.

"You never know where your career path will take you. I feel lucky to have had a diverse educational background and training that has opened so many different opportunities," Maraldo said. "I'm thankful I have landed here at Delran. The administration and students have done an amazing job making me feel at home and part of the community. This is truly a special place. GO BEARS!"

## TEACHER FEATURE:

### Weinberg motivates and accelerates students' learning

By ZEYNEP OKYAY  
Staff Writer

Many students think algebra is difficult, but in Andrea Weinberg's class, students seem to love the material that is being taught and they are successful.

"She pushes us to do better in class. She motivates us and tells us we don't need to stress about it and that helps a lot when we are also struggling to keep up with other classes' assignments," said Omer Ozmert, a junior at DHS.

Weinberg thinks that making the students feel comfortable by using positive reinforcement is one of the most important things to do as a teacher. She focuses on the progress a student makes rather than highlighting their mistakes.

"I feel like kids respond to positive reinforcement," she said. "I always try to be positive, never negative. I've never gotten any results from being negative. I feel like kids do better when they respect their teacher. When you respect and like your teacher, kids tend to be more successful. Being negative and being too tough on kids only makes them anxious which results in bad grades, and they do not want to participate in class."

She says that some students in her class do not speak English and have a difficult time under-

standing the material that is being taught. She knows that it is already hard for non-native English speakers to try to learn a new language on top of trying to be successful in classes.

"I do try to break down the steps and make the

math easy," said Weinberg. "I think that my relationship I have with the kids is what makes them successful. I try to build good relationships with my students."

Weinberg also builds relationships with the students by making them feel comfortable in class, especially the ESL students who may be too shy to ask questions or to talk in front of others.

She strives to make a connection with her students despite the language barrier.

Likewise, Weinberg is willing to help students as much as she can after classes by arranging Google Meets.

"Mrs. Weinberg is extremely welcoming! She has a very warm personality which makes her approachable," said Joseph Zobel, a DHS guidance counselor. "Mrs. Weinberg allows students the opportunities to come see her and ask her questions. She is available for the students before and after class and is willing to help them at any time. Her willingness to be there for her students is simply amazing!"

*"She (Mrs. Weinberg) pushes us to do better in class. She motivates us and tells us we don't need to stress about it and that helps a lot when we are also struggling to keep up with other classes' assignments," said Omer Ozmert, a junior at DHS.*

# Pandemic bring rise in mental health issues

By DRUE HAMLET  
Broadcast Manager

Due to the global pandemic, mental health issues have been on the rise. Hospitals are already filled because of the coronavirus; however, beds are also being filled by patients seeking help for mental health disorders.

In an article by *STAT News*, the CEO of Miami based Banyan Health Systems discussed how much the pandemic has made these numbers increase.

“Calls to our centers are up 40 to 50 percent and our vulnerable behavioral health population has skyrocketed,” Vincent Carrodegua said.

The first step to sparking change is to acknowledge the problem. When it comes to mental health, school is one of the first places that counselors and administrators can raise awareness. It is all about open communication and the willingness to ask for help.

Bobbi Jo Gormley, school psychologist, expressed similar thoughts on the issue, that awareness must be raised in order to invoke positive change.

“There is a stigma regarding being stressed, depressed, anxious and overwhelmed, so people try to push through and handle things as best they can but still feel like they are failing,” Gormley said. “It is important to know that many people are feeling this way and it is good to

communicate and talk to others and let them know you are struggling and not doing ok because there are a lot of others who can relate. We all need to be more supportive, caring and understanding of what everyone is going through because it affects everyone differently and that is ok.”

Now that schools around the country are online in some fashion,

*“There is a stigma regarding being stressed, depressed, anxious and overwhelmed so people try to push through and handle things as best they can but still feel like they are failing,” said DHS Psychologist Bobbi Jo Gormley.*

there is a connection between computer usage and mental health numbers. According to *Medical News Today*, it is not healthy for children and teenagers to be looking at a computer screen all day. There have been studies to even show how this overuse of technology can contribute to eyestrain and difficulty focusing, and also depression. This over usage is also believed to have a negative impact on the development of young people, according to *Medical News Today*.

DHS junior Jake Baumann discussed his mental health struggles that have intensified from the pandemic. He has mastered a lot of

coping skills, but he still faces these intense moments of depression and anxiety, especially with online learning.

“With online school, it forces me to be at home alone, and I can vouch for a lot of people with mental health problems that when you are alone or you feel alone, all of your emotions and thoughts are amplified greatly... it is really rough for me and my mental health won’t allow me to complete my school work,” Baumann said.

The isolation and loneliness that the pandemic has brought on seems to be the leading contributor to this issue. When the isolation began, a lot of people, mostly teenagers, turned to social media and technology to stay in touch. While at the start of the pandemic, technology was a solution, it seems now it is starting to have a negative effect on people.

Social media is designed to keep you coming back for more and more. These platforms are addictive and are even traced back to anxiety and depression, which takes a large negative toll on mental health, according to the Harvard Medical Clinic.

Communication and openness is essential during this time. Technology is an effective, reliable way for people to communicate; however it can have a negative effect on mental health. DHS Guidance Counselor

***Continued on page 8***

## Isolation & loneliness bring rise in mental health issues

*Continued from page 7*

Joseph Zobel, explained how technology and social media can have a positive effect.

“A great outlet for students to turn to is the power of technology. Students can still call, text, message, etc. each other during this time. Students are amazing when it comes to technology and I think they can use it for the better for their peers. Reach out to each other, have virtual hangouts, and continue to interact,” Zobel said.

Endless studies show how much mental health is seeping through into our everyday lives. Sometimes mental health can be looked as a taboo subject, when in reality, a lot of people suffer with these issues.

However, there does not seem to be much change in terms of legislation and big government which is why the issue is getting so out of hand.

Commissioner Judy Fitzgerald, for the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities spoke on this issue in late January. Her concerns about budget cuts were laid out in an article from *The Augusta Chronicle* by Beau Evans.

“She told lawmakers Thursday that cuts totaling about \$80 million through June 2021 would be felt by more than 200,000 people with mental health issues in Georgia the agency served last year,” Beau writes.

These federal budget cuts are leaving people with tough decisions. With the pandemic on top of it all, it is hard to prioritize and decide what is best for the majority of citizens.

There is a possibility that if this issue is taken more seriously in the higher levels of government, more change can be made. However, there are some things that we can do on a smaller scale, within our community, to address this issue.

One of the biggest and most effective ways is providing students and the community with outlets. Those who are struggling with their mental health should always feel like they have someone to talk to, whether that be a parent, friend, counselor, or teacher.

Depending on the urgency of the situation, sometimes just a walk around the block or a designated time for meditation can make a positive impact. Exercise is proven to fight against anxiety and depression in small doses, so working out is always an option. Listening to music also releases endorphins to your brain to improve your mood.

Another option, journaling, has also been a very effective way to deal with stress and overwhelming feelings by getting them out on paper.

In more serious cases, there are several numbers to call like with 24/7 facilities and emergency hotlines are almost always available. These services can save lives, so it’s always important to tell those who are struggling about these opportunities. It is always best to put these precautions in place before it is too late.

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline is (800)-273-8255.

*The isolation and loneliness that the pandemic has brought on seems to be the leading contributor to increases in mental health issues.*

The National Suicide Prevention Hotline  
1 (800) 273-8255



## Marvel Cinematic Universe makes waves with *WandaVision*

By DEREK NAMNUN  
Staff Writer

*Avengers: Endgame* was dubbed “the most ambitious crossover movie of all time” by many of its viewers. It was a global phenomenon and left those who are diehard fans in awe at the masterpiece of a film.

Almost two years later, Marvel launched its plans for Phase 4. Fans who have been deprived of content for over a year are now hopeful to see new content being released in 2021.

Local Marvel enthusiast and sophomore at DHS, Mahir Sanori stated, “I am pretty invested in the MCU since they have been constant with content ever since I was a little kid.”

It is undeniable that Marvel is moving in a new direction with the Phase 4 releases. New casts of characters and new chapters for existing characters are riddled throughout the upcoming installments. Viewers got a taste for the revitalized storyline when *WandaVision* dropped on Disney+. *WandaVision* takes place shortly after the events of *Avengers: Endgame*, and follows the amplified emotional struggle of a magical woman who lost the love of her life.

The shocking twists and turns throughout the series created a long internet strand of theories based on inspiration from the original comic book versions of the characters. These theories are just one reaction to the new content, as the following of the MCU grows larger and larger.

New audiences - in favor of the shorter series format - have flocked to the new Marvel sensation. Overall, fan response to *WandaVision* has been overwhelmingly positive. Fans are full of hope that further installments can match the quality of *WandaVision*.

The remaining releases for 2021 includes *Loki* in May, *Black Widow* on

May 7, and *What if...?* drops in the summer. Also, *Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings* comes out on July 9th, followed by *Ms. Marvel*, *Eternals*, and *Hawkeye* towards the end of the year.

Recently announced, *Spiderman: No Way Home* will hit theaters on Christmas day this year with the hopes that the COVID-19 situation allows for theater viewing. Tom Holland’s Spi-

*New audiences  
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der-Man is a clear fan favorite, so a dramatic title reveal only enhanced the hype. *Spider-Man: No Way Home* will also feature actors Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield who have played Spider-Man in previous franchises. By seeing the two older actors on the cast list, fans are hopeful for the integration of the “Multiverse” as displayed in many Spider-Man comics. The Multiverse is based on the concept that there are alternate universes with similarities and differences to the one we know. *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* was the latest appearance of the Multiverse, however the film is not canon to the MCU, so there is no definitive proof of any interdimensional crossovers.

“I hope that in the third installment... we will get to see Peter grow into more of an adult Spider-man who can truly

tackle difficult responsibilities,” said DHS junior and long-time Marvel fan Gabe Moreira on his anticipation for the intricacies of the upcoming plot.

Aside from the above named movies and shows, there are an additional 21 series and movies coming in 2022 and 2023 to wrap up Phase 4. Of those, flexibility is allowed by the fact that there are uncertain dates as well as untitled releases to be determined at a later date. Marvel will be sure to make a theatrical reveal sometime in the future.

Unfortunately, over the past year the Marvel family had lost one of their own. Chadwick Boseman lost his battle with cancer at just 43 years of age. Playing highly influential roles such as *Black Panther*’s T’Challa, and Jackie Robinson in *42*, Marvel fans as well as film fans in general, were devastated to say the least. For 2022’s *Black Panther 2*, Marvel has confirmed that they will not be recasting T’Challa.

“Chadwick was not just an actor playing a superhero, he was a superhero in real life. He was a figure of hope for the future generations of people of color, showing them that a man with the same color as them can be royalty... He dedicated his life to making the lives of others better,” said Sanori.

Though his passing is tragic, Marvel fans have united to honor Boseman in a number of ways. Moving forward, Marvel and its fans will pay homage as the legacy of the Black Panther lives on in the glorious story of the MCU.

It was clear that the first three phases shaped a generation for Marvel fans everywhere. Phase 4 and beyond are sure to be highly influential to the younger generations of Marvel fans everywhere. For now, everyone is more than excited with the upcoming additions to their favorite stories in the MCU.

## Undercover heroes: support staff keeps hospitals running

By SERAFINA CAROLLO  
Editor-in-Chief

The nurses and doctors who are on the front lines of the COVID-19 battle have been praised internationally for their bravery and service. But nurses and doctors cannot be heroes without other members of the hospital staff supporting them.

Janet Mendoza is an environmental service worker at Virtua Memorial Hospital in Mount Holly who is responsible for keeping the ICU and patient rooms clean and disposing of hazardous waste such as sharps containers. Her tasks are similar to that of a custodial worker.

“How are we going to keep everything clean and sanitized if we don’t have Janet, our environmental service worker, cleaning everything for us at all times? She made sure that we always had Clorox wipes when no one could find them and it sounds funny but she made sure we had toilet paper when the rest of the world was out of it,” recounted RN and ICU nurse Lori Stens, who works in the same unit as Mendoza.

Catherine Gosizk works for food services at this hospital and is tasked with delivering meals to all the patients on the unit.

“It was hard (in the beginning) to watch from the outside and not be able to go into the rooms or give people a hug. It was devastating,” said Gosizk.

Julius Carter is a distribution worker who has been with the

hospital for 20 years. Carter is responsible for keeping all the nursing units stocked with supplies necessary to properly care for patients and protect staff when entering rooms. Carter is the reason the nurses at this ICU never worked a minute without a mask.

“On top of the regular supplies that we needed, Julius now had to make sure that we had enough PPE to supply every single person at all times. I never had to worry about

impact they had on the recovery of COVID-19 patients.

Carter simply noted that due to the pandemic he had to work more. Yet, he doesn’t mention how due to the pandemic, he and the distribution team became in charge of stocking and locating more supplies, supplies that could mean life or death.

“Think about if I don’t have an N-95 mask at the ready at all times and I have a patient who is coding and I have to run around the unit searching for an N-95 mask that puts that patient’s life at risk, does it not?” said Stens.

He himself was now working in a COVID-19 positive dedicated intensive care unit, and yet only makes mention of his extended hours.

Kirston Ransom RN, an ICU nurse in the COVID-19 dedicated unit, remembers how the patients would smile upon seeing Gosizk enter the room, if only for a quick minute, to drop off their meals. In an effort to conserve PPE during the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, ancillary workers would not go into the rooms which prevented Gosizk from her usual routine.

“Catherine (a food service worker) was just as worried about getting sick as anyone, but knew what it meant to our patients to have that connection. Eventually, when she knew someone was in the unit for a long time, she selflessly would go into rooms if only for a minute to

*Continued on page 11*

*These are the unsung healthcare heroes you don't see on tik tok or social media. They don't have a nurses union fighting for them, yet they still put their lives on the line.*

having any of the equipment or supplies that I needed because he was there working overtime,” said Stens.

These are the unsung healthcare heroes you don’t see on tik tok or social media. They don’t have a nurses union fighting for them, yet they still put their lives on the line.

When talking with Mendoza, Gosizk, and Carter about their roles in the hospital during the Coronavirus pandemic, it becomes very clear that they are not aware of the

# Support staff integral to fight of COVID-19

## *Continued from page 10*

say hello so that the patient could see a different face,” said Ransom.

The Nurse Director of the Intensive Care Unit Mike Kirk also noted how Gosizk would also go around and check on the psyche of the nurses and the people working on the unit.

As an environmental services worker, Mendoza was going into COVID-19 positive patient rooms and making sure the space was sanitized and safe for the nurses. She never stopped coming to work, and did her job with dignity and grace.

Kirk said, “Without Janet we would have failed. I commend her and all the ancillary staff because we are a team, we’re family. When you’re a team you need every member of the team to step up and they stepped up. Even though they have a different title than nurses and doctors, they are our ICU family and without them we can’t survive.”

Mendoza, Gosizk, and Carter are just three examples of people who continued to work throughout the pandemic with the same care and integrity that they always delivered to the patients.

Although the nurses and doctors are being revered as heroes by the public, in their eyes, the ancillary staff

are their heroes.

Kirk also did not forget to praise the community that held him, his nursing, and ICU staff up at the time when they needed it most.

“The community is the unsung hero too, let me add. They kept us going by supporting us from home by sending food, flowers, chocolate, and all the cards we got from kids. There is nothing greater than getting a little kid’s card that says you are a superhero,” said Kirk.

He also recognized all the families of healthcare workers who he named unsung heroes as they made sacrifices so that their spouses or parents could go work extra shifts at the hospital.

Kirk was passionate that the success made in his ICU was not only due to communal effort inside the hospital, but also effort from everyone at home who gave something or made sacrifices for the greater goal of fighting this virus.

“We all got through this together because we had to,” said Kirk in reference to the nurses and staff members in his unit. “We took care of each other and I’m proud of everybody. This ICU is a family and look families fight, families argue, families hug, families do all these things but in the end I would go to war with these people again, because that’s what we did.”

## We asked. You answered.

### What is your favorite sport?

“My favorite sport is competitive cheerleading. This is my favorite sport because you build a super close relationship with your team who becomes a family. Also, it involves a lot of trust and teamwork because in order to stunt your flyer must trust that you will not drop them.

It’s a sport that has a lot of risk, but with that risk comes tons of reward. There is no better feeling than the rush you get when they announce that your team won first place. Additionally, being able to tumble is pretty cool because it forces you to trust yourself and you learn some pretty good party tricks,” said Samantha Dix, grade 9.



## DHS faculty comment on the case:

### Transgender athletes hope to clear hurdle and play according to gender identity

By ANNA CORRADINO

#### Editorials Editor

In late February, the Biden administration withdrew from the federal lawsuit in Connecticut regarding a transgender athlete case. This lawsuit, which was filed the previous year, was intended to ban transgender athletes from participating in girls' high school sports.

The withdrawal from the case means that President Biden revoked any federal support for the ban that was previously given by the Trump administration. The Trump administration was in favor of the ban of transgender athletes, believing that they (transgender females that were born as males) had a physical advantage over those born as females.

This case started in Connecticut when cisgender athletes claimed that they were losing titles, wins, and opportunities because they felt forced to compete against transgender athletes.

In Connecticut, schools allow students to compete in sports as the gender with which they identify rather than the gender they were assigned at birth.

DHS field hockey coach and physical education teacher Catherine Traitz shared her views on the topic.

"As a coach and an educator, I can see how you would want to honor a student's feelings. I feel as though the student(s) should be able to do as they feel. I personally wouldn't want any student to feel that their personal feelings were invalid, everyone is entitled to have their own feelings and they should be validated, whether you agree with them or not," said Traitz.

The subject of transgender students in sports is a widely debated and controversial topic. When this subject is debated, one side worries about the biological aspects of it.

Some people assume that trans women have the advantage over cisgender women because they were born male, so they automatically are stronger, faster, and bigger. But according to the American Civil Liberties Union, most of these statements have been proven to be false.

The two sides of the argument surrounding this issue are safety versus inclusion.

Garrett Lucas, Delran High School's football coach,

believes that inclusion is extremely important. He shared his own experience involving inclusion.

"One of my buddies had Down syndrome and we got him in one of our football games and he scored a touchdown. If he never got to play that game, sports wouldn't have been able to pave his path," Lucas shared.

Not only has Lucas worked in an environment in which inclusion was a key aspect, he also coached a trans stu-

dent on his previous football team.

"Before I came here, I actually had a transgender male on my football team. I would say that you can have safety, but inclusion is more important. Injuries happen left and right, so that's why I think inclusion is big," said Lucas.

To continue, the withdrawal of federal support on this case gives transgender students an opportunity to play as themselves and with the gender with which they identify.

Banning transgender women from high school sports could trickle into other areas, opponents argue. If someone is thought to be trans, they may be subjected to testing, such as genital exams and hormone evaluations. Opponents of the ban wonder how masculine

*Continued on page 14*

*The withdrawal of federal support on this case gives transgender students an opportunity to play as themselves and with the gender with which they identify.*

## DHS Boys Tennis takes the court: COVID-19 style

By JOHN BAGONIS

### News Editor

It's been two years since spring sports have been able to take place at Delran High School. Last spring, all of Delran's teams, including boys' tennis, were excited to get their season underway.

Then, the pandemic put an end to these plans and Delran High School was closed on March 13, 2020.

Now, after two long years of no spring sports, the boys' tennis team is having a season. Despite some restrictions, players and coaches are excited for the return.

The DHS boys' tennis team had seen a great improvement involving the number of players and overall skill level between seasons a couple years ago. The two seasons that took place before the pandemic, the DHS boys' tennis team had seen their record greatly improve from 0-17 to 6-10.

On top of the improved record, the team had multiple players make county teams and even had a win in a big Burlington county tournament.

Many players had started their journey in tennis when joining the team in 2019. Despite having a team composed of mostly beginners, they led the team to



*Junior Haadi Khan sets up in practice and prepares to serve. Khan is excited for the prospect of a season.*

**Photo by John Bagonis.**

winning six more games than the prior year.

After that great season two years ago, the players were very excited to see how much they had improved for the 2020 season, only for it to end up being canceled before games even started.

Junior tennis player Haadi Khan is very excited about finally being able to play after his sophomore year of tennis was canceled. He mentioned how with all of the restrictions the pandemic has created, it would be nice to finally get to play again.

"I'm mainly looking forward to just playing tennis with my friends and going to other schools," Khan said.

He also mentioned some of the restrictions might be hard for him to play with, however he's mainly very excited for this next season.

DHS math teacher and boys'/girls' tennis coach, William Bodenschatz, also had a lot to say about this unfortunate situation.

"I was upset for all of the players who didn't get a chance to play. It was only the second year for a lot of players and they didn't get a chance to show off their skills from all of their training during the off season. If there were seniors last year, thankfully we didn't have any, I would've felt bad that they missed their last season," Bodenschatz said.

Bodenschatz recognizes how much of a fun experience tennis can be for the players and knew all of the players had put in tons of work during the offseason. Sadly, the season was cut short last year.

However, he did mention a positive aspect of the situation, that all of the players from last year hadn't graduated, therefore everyone could still play again. Bodenschatz also alluded to

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## After delay, players & coaches excited for start of tennis season

*Continued from page 13*

when the season would be starting for his players.

“April 1 is when the season starts and we begin practices. We usually have a whole month to practice, however since we’re starting April 1st instead of March 1st like usual, we’ll only have the first two weeks of April to practice and then games will begin,” Bodenschatz said.

In addition to a quick start to the season, Bodenschatz discussed how he was pushing to get harder teams on the schedule, because he believes his players are capable of competing at a higher level.

He was also able to talk about the restrictions that would be required during the season.

“This year there will be two cans of balls, each

singles player or doubles player from each team will hold their own can. You won’t be able to touch any of your opponents’ tennis balls and there’s no more handshakes with your opponents at the beginning and end of matches,” Bodenschatz said.

He also included how these same restrictions didn’t really get in the way of the girls’ tennis season earlier in the school year. Games against Palmyra and Cinnaminson are ones to look forward to as the scores were very close two years ago. After a wild pandemic, it seems that the DHS boys’ tennis team is finally set to have their season.

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## With court ruling on the horizon, transgender athletes look forward to chance to play according to their identity

*Continued from page 12*

can a female player look before she is accused of being transgender.

“You can’t just say ‘Well that person looks like a guy.’ Actually, they’re not. You can’t just assume,” Traitz said. “In our department (HPE), we are always changing and adapting to accommodate our students and we have also been taught new techniques to include all students. In regards to the LGBTQ community, as a HPE teacher, I try to make inclusion my first priority. Bringing all groups of students together is the goal, and I think it’s fantastic.”

However, some people are still concerned that biological differ-

ences between males and females may make a difference on the court or playing field.

Yet, others argue that differences already occur and will continue to occur no matter who is on the team. No matter gender, advantages range from person to person. There’s always a chance of being up against better, stronger, and faster competition.

“I think there’s going to be advantages and disadvantages across the board. It goes back to inclusion. You can’t hold people back for their height or weight or anything like that because that’s where it really stinks for people,” said Lucas.

The two sides of safety and inclu-

sion are the main concerns of this topic, but there are other factors that affect the complexity of the case. It is definitely a tricky case, and the results vary from situation to situation.

“It’s sad that people are so narrow minded, that they cannot take other people’s feelings into consideration. Everyone at some point in their life is afraid of the unknown, something new, and change. But once people take the time to understand and listen to others, that fear can slowly dissolve. Like a light bulb goes off and the thought of ‘wow I should have taken the time to educate myself on this sooner,’ crosses their mind,” said Traitz.

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## Athletes miss fans and long to play in packed stadium

By BROOKE OBUCHOWSKI  
**Sports Editor**

High School sports have always been a highlight of high school, but this year athletes have definitely felt the absence of the cheering, screaming, and celebrating crowds that fill gymnasiums.

This year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic many athletes have played games with and without fans. As of mid-February, fans were permitted to attend DHS sporting events. However, numbers were limited to only two adults for each player. Though fans can cause athletes problems by not attending.

According to *The Los Angeles Times* article “No Adrenaline Buzz? No More Choking? How no fans in the stands affects athletes,” without fans, athletes lack adrenaline.

Though fans can also cause some athletes to stress, and perform badly.

“There are pros and cons to having fans at sporting events. Personally, I feel that fans add a lot of energy to the atmosphere and make the meet a lot more fun. However, I also think that when fans are attending, there is more pressure on the athletes to perform their best,” said Emma Frith, a junior and swimmer at DHS.

Winter sports were broadcasted this year for people to watch in the

comfort of their own home

“I like that the games were recorded and live streamed because I feel like it made it easier for other family members and friends who can’t come watch the games in person be able to have quick access

*“I 100% prefer having fans at our games. Especially the student section, they make the games more fun and exciting and they really get our confidence up out on the court,” said basketball player Riley Ahrens.*

and watch on their phones,” said Riley Ahrens, a sophomore and basketball player at DHS.

Student athletes can have several different responses to anxiety, according to the NCAA (National College Athletics Association) article, “Mind, Body, and Sport: Anxiety disorders” by Scott Goldman. Anxiety disorders for athletes can range greatly, and usually are caused by thoughts about the future, performance, school, and more.

Information from the NCAA article shows how athletes can experience PTSD from an injury, or by watching a teammate become

severely injured. Traumatic champion loss can also happen, however it does not always meet the anxiety criteria psychologists use. Usually, traumatic champion loss is caused by a loss in a major game. Both of these disorders can cause an athlete to lack in performance for fear of losing, or being injured; sometimes athletes quit altogether.

“I think that when there’s fans in the gym, the players can have maybe some mixed reactions. I think some of them probably feed off the excitement of playing well in front of their peers and their parents...” said Pete Miles, varsity girls basketball coach at DHS.

Miles also discussed how not every player enjoys having fans.

“...Some on the other hand might get a higher sense of anxiety, because things aren’t going well. You know they’re realizing they’re not playing as well as they would like to in front of their peers and their parents, but I pretty much think it’s a personal reaction and it can affect how they play positively and negatively it depends on the individual and how they receive it,” said Miles.

The majority of athletes enjoy playing in front of fans.

“I 100% prefer having fans at our games. Especially the student section, they make the games more  
*Continued on page 16*

## Fans motivate athletes and bring excitement to games

### *Continued from page 15*

fun and exciting and they really get our confidence up out on the court. It feels great to have lots of people supporting you in person and not just over the phone,” said Ahrens.

Over time, many have been forced to get used to the change of playing with limited or no fans.

“...I think that they get extra encouragement from that, so you know that part we definitely missed that this year we didn’t have that, you know we had big games against Cinnaminson in their gym with none of our fans there. We had big games against in the past, in the playoffs with everybody there and I think it makes a big difference, for me there’s nothing like playing basketball in a packed gym especially for the players,” said Miles.

Sources from *The Los Angeles Times* article men-

tioned how they lacked motivation due to the quiet that now fill stadiums. Many of the professional level sports teams have had artificial noise playing during games that is seen as distracting for players. The impulse to want to play your best is also noted to be gone.

“...There’s not as much noise going on, with that it seems that communicating with your players in the game is a little bit easier because they can hear you, you know you can get their attention a but quicker, and there aren’t any distractions from other folks and other noises and you know a lot of things that go on during a game. So I thought it was without the fans it was much like a practice, but with a higher level of competition,” said Miles.

## We asked. You answered.

What is your favorite sport and why do you enjoy it?

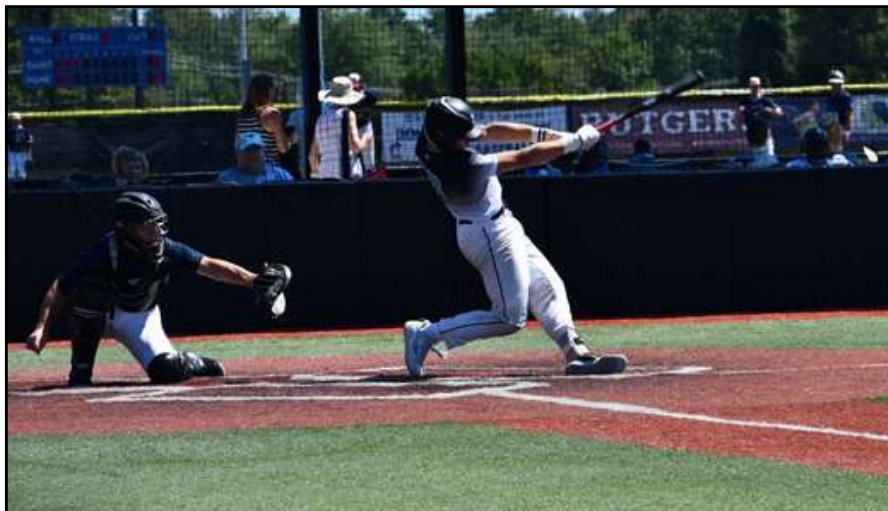


“Rowing because of how much it forces you to test your limits and how it continually forces you to push yourself as hard as possible. And just how strong and powerful I feel when I’m rowing,” said Allison Duff (center), grade 12.

Photo courtesy of Luke Arcaini.



## Tyler Leroy, DHS senior, will step up to the plate at New Orleans University



*With a natural swing, Tyler Leroy hits a home run while on tour in Virginia. Photo courtesy of ProSkills Baseball.*

By SEAN MOLLOY  
Staff Writer

Tyler Leroy has always been one of the top athletes in the class of 2021, according to PBR (Prep Baseball Report) and he is proving why he deserves that title.

He fell in love with baseball at a very young age and has been training ever since. His hard work has earned him a scholarship to New Orleans University where he will fulfill his dream of playing Division I baseball.

Leroy has been playing baseball since he was about 8 or 9 years old and never missed a beat. He is listed as one of the top catchers in New Jersey for the class of 2021.

The decision to stick to baseball was pretty easy for him; he was naturally good at the game. However, he didn't just pick up a bat for the first time ever and start crushing it.

Like anyone else, it took time and he had to perfect his craft. He claimed there were numerous times he wanted to quit because of his performance, a few strikeouts and a couple botched ground balls got to his head, but his coaches reminded him of how great he is, practice makes perfect.

"The moment I remember feeling like I was actually progressing as a baseball player was when one of my coaches pulled me aside and explained to me the talent I truly have. I felt as though I was playing well but he made sure I knew that my performance was much better than just well."

*Continued on page 18*

## We asked. You answered.

What is your favorite sport?



"I really like figure skating/ice skating!! It's such an underrated sport and can be hard to master so seeing people perform is always such a rush. I just think it's super cool to watch and it really is different every time" said Danielle Lohrman, grade 11.



"Basketball. My reason is that I can get out any frustration stress while playing. In the game you're supposed to give it your best while playing so that's what I do. Also it's a really enjoyable sport for me," said Kyle McLaughlin, grade 12.

*All photos courtesy of Luke Arcaini.*

# DHS baseball player makes it Division 1

*Continued from page 17*

He was 13 when his AAU coach had told him this and since then, he practically sleeps with the baseball.

Leroy's physique is somewhat unusual. He is a senior, roughly 6'3" 200 pounds and can absolutely destroy a baseball.

The physical build of his body is a bit rare, but alongside his talent he is definitely not an ordinary senior. Looking over his clips from games one can see him tossing his bat in the air after embarrassing the pitcher and crushing a home run.

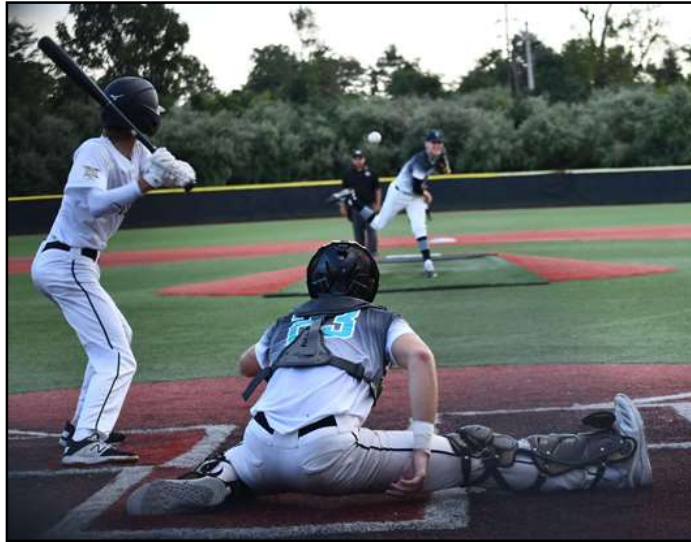
Growing up he was always taller, but never was seen as a big or "built" kid. However, the past couple years he has been working non stop, now when you see him, he is a lot bigger than his peers.

Leroy has always been a superb athlete. As a little kid, he was a multi-sport athlete playing football and baseball. Even then, he stood out from the rest. In ninth grade, he was the starting quarterback for the freshman team and absolutely torched his opponents.

At the end of the season he had roughly 600 passing yards with 6 touchdowns, and about 500 rushing yards with 7 rushing touchdowns. Although, he is primarily a baseball player. He is consistently on the baseball field or in the gym working on his body. He made this comment about his schedule.

"Everyday I have training for baseball and in my free time I make sure to hit the gym whenever I have the opportunity to," Leroy explained.

Leroy is extremely dedicated to his health and wellbeing as well as his strength and skill. His sched-



*Tyler Leroy's versatility allows him to be a phenomenal catcher. Leroy, a DHS senior, is set to play baseball at New Orleans University next year.*

ule is as follows: Wake up at 5 a.m. to go lift weights, then school, then lifts again after school. He is scheduled for games and scouting events every here and there whenever his trainers can get him in there.

Leroy's goals have always been set high, but never too specific up until recent years. When asked about going pro, Leroy answered with confidence.

"I've been working hard every day and I'm only looking to get better. I've made it D1 now and my

next step is impressing everyone at the next level and earning my spot," Leroy said.

One of the trainers at Pro Skills Baseball, Andrew Griffin, has been working with Leroy for a bit. He monitors his swing, helps him improve his throwing arm, records his velocity numbers and much more. He is excited to see Leroy at the next level and has nothing but faith in him

"Tyler recently switched over to our development a few years ago and was a mediocre baseball player. Over the past couple years I have never seen a kid work so hard and progress the way he has. I think he has every shot at going pro and I will not be surprised if I see his name pop up on a draft board," Griffin said.

Regardless of skill, Leroy's work ethic is unmatched and he is extremely dedicated to the game. He dreams of playing in the MLB, and with the progress he is making and how far he has already come it does not sound far-fetched. As of the present, he has his mind on New Orleans and is ready to begin his next chapter in life.