



Lourdes Diaz Promoted to MDCPS Chief Academic Officer

By Anthony Vidal
 @AnthonyVidalR

Many leaders have gotten their start at Miami Lakes Educational Center (MLEC). It is a place where students learn to become the best versions of themselves. Because of that, it also attracts great leaders.

Lourdes Diaz, who was MLEC's principal from 2015-2019, is one such leader.

Diaz, who is currently the North Region Administrative Director for Miami Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), was recently promoted at the monthly school board meeting. She will now serve as the District's Chief Academic Officer of Academics and Transformation, a position that entails ensuring that all students in the county have the opportunity to receive academic programs in various areas.

Diaz, a life-long learner, is a natural fit for this role.

When Diaz came to MLEC, after the retirement of long-serving and popular principal, James V. Parker, she observed and learned.

"Ms. Diaz has always been up for a challenge. She is truly a lifelong learner," said Ms. Helena Castro, MLEC's activities director.

"When she arrived at MLEC, some questioned whether she had the experience to head the technical college. Diaz immersed herself and earned the respect of those in the post-secondary sphere."

In her first few months, she also had an entire new staff to meet, an academy structure to learn, and students to get to know. And she did.

When she first arrived at MLEC the first step Diaz took was to observe. It wasn't until Diaz understood the school, along with its staff and students that she made a plan. She made it a point to let her staff know her short and long-term expectations and plans for MLEC.

"She wasn't just a principal that stayed in her office or did whatever paperwork and went home. She was definitely out there," said Khimmoy Hudson, MLEC alum and Posse Scholar, completing his freshman year at Pomona College.

Take a look through old yearbooks and find that amidst pep rallies, Ms. Diaz wasn't just observing from the sidelines, but could be seen taking part in a friendly competition like running a three-legged race with another teacher by her side while students cheered them on.

Although MLEC had no sports team or a band, that did not stop Ms. Diaz from actively aiming to build school spirit. Diaz started and boosted traditions at MLEC, such as the annual Jingle Jog, United Nations Day, and a large array of school-wide events. She made sure that MLEC felt like a family and that the school was also an active member of the community.

In 2017, when Hurricane Irma ravaged much of Florida,

MLEC served as a shelter. At the time, MLEC was one of the shelters that the Red Cross was unable to assist or send provisions to. Diaz remained on site for three days, making sure that people felt as comfortable as possible and inspecting the campus, making sure it would be safe for students and staff when they returned.

Diaz definitely left her mark on MLEC. It was under her leadership that MLEC earned the recognition of the Nation's Best Magnet School.

"Winning the prestigious Magnet Schools of America award is another example of Miami-Dade's belief that all children have the potential to soar to extraordinary academic heights when they are exposed to a curriculum that is cutting-edge and robust," former M-DCPS Superintendent Alberto M. Carvalho told The Harbinger.

And Diaz's work at MLEC did not go unnoticed. In 2018, she was nominated as Principal of the Year and went on to earn the title of the North Region Principal of the Year.

"Diaz's capacity and willingness to go all in and expand her knowledge and experience will serve her well as she works to fulfill the academic promise of students across Miami-Dade County," said Ms. Castro.

Diaz's path to the District started here in South Florida where she grew up and went to school. After obtaining her high school diploma from Miami Senior High, Diaz ventured to col-



lege at Brown University where she majored in English, American Literature, and Psychology.

After graduating from college, Diaz returned to Miami-Dade where she worked at several schools throughout M-DCPS. Diaz taught English at Barbara Goleman, later became an assistant principal at Coral Park Senior High School, principal at Hialeah Middle School, and principal at Miami Lakes Educational Center. Her accomplishments then led her to become the Administrative Director of M-DCPS's North Region in 2019.

"She's a visionary, she always had a plan. Her goal, which was clear from the start, was to see how we can make what we're currently doing better. And she was successful at that because she put us on the map," said Erica Evans-DeSimone, Assistant Principal at Miami Lakes Educational Center and Technical College.

Evans-DeSimone worked as an Academy Leader and Social Studies instructor all

throughout Ms. Diaz's tenure at MLEC. In these positions, Evans-DeSimone witnessed how Diaz attended school board meetings to let the community know what occurred at MLEC, visited neighboring middle schools to drive enrollment, and showcased students' achievements through social media.

Lourdes Diaz has dedicated her life to education. She has worked to ensure that students are prepared to succeed in college and career. She has worked to earn the respect of faculty, staff and educational leaders across the region. The office of Academics and Transformation is a natural fit.

Meanwhile, Diaz continues to excel in her career and becomes Chief Academic Officer for the county of Miami Dade. In MLEC memories of her leadership still live on in the minds of teachers like Ms. Evans-Desimone.

"She could teach a master class on leadership, she's awesome."

The Unsettling Side of Maternal Health

By Sophia Garcia
 @s_sophiv

Maternal mortality is the death of a woman during or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy from any cause related to the pregnancy or its management.

"The annual number of female deaths from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management (excluding accidental or incidental causes) during pregnancy and childbirth or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, irrespective of the duration and site of the pregnancy," the World Health Organization stated.

In late February, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released a report regarding maternal mortality rates for 2020 in the United States. The biggest take away from this report is that the number of women who have suffered from maternal mortality

has increased from years past.

In a journal from The Commonwealth Fund, it is reported that a ratio of more than double the maternal deaths exist within the United States compared to other high-income countries such as Canada, France, and the UK. In comparison to the countries of New Zealand, Norway, and the Netherlands, this ratio is even more substantial.

The maternal mortality rate for 2020 was 23.8 deaths per 100,000 live births. Among them, non-Hispanic White women saw no significant increase, whereas Hispanic women observed a significant rise in mortality. In the case of Black women, the numbers were considerably higher.

The mortality rate for Black women reached 55.3 deaths per 100,000 live births— 2.9 times the rate for

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Shortages and Food Insecurity in 2022

By Melanie Cabrera
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Shortages have been affecting people globally since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic two years ago. From basic necessities like toilet paper to particular brand items, there has been a lack of supply regarding various items. This has led to higher demand for those items and increased prices, especially in the last few months.

Due to the pandemic, many lost their jobs and most businesses struggled to stay open. Although stores eventually reopened and most aspects of life have returned to normal, a lack of workers, complications within supply chains, and the conflict in Ukraine have all continued to impact the global and national economy.

According to Feeding America, a hunger-relief organization in the U.S., around 35 million people were food insecure in 2019 compared to an estimated 42 million in 2021.

Food items like cream cheese, cereal, bottled water, eggs, wheat, and meat have been lacking in quantity; this, in addition to increasing gas prices in a number of countries, has led to inflation in prices across the board.

"When I go to buy Cuban bread at the bakery corner store, it used to be \$1.50 — it is \$2.00 now," Alice Tansini, a rising junior, recounted.

The global population at large has also faced increasing levels of food insecurity. The UN reported that over 155 million people suffered from food insecurity in 2020, while a report by the Global Network Against Food Crisis cited that around 193 million had reached crisis level in 2022.

"There's a lot of rising prices that I'm concerned about because there's a lot of low-income people who can't afford food when it rises," sophomore Sophie Martinez said.

The distribution of food insecurity has disproportionately affected areas of the

world, impacting low-income countries the most. These countries have already been facing challenges like climate change, which, now combined with rising fertilizer prices and other factors, has led to increasing food insecurity in places like Zimbabwe and Malawi.

Around 27 million individuals are classified as living with food crises in the Republic of the Congo while Haiti makes up a third of all individuals at or above crisis level.

Meanwhile in the U.S., baby milk formula is among the most recent shortages the nation has experienced. The shortage was triggered by a voluntary recall by Abbott Nutrition, one of the top baby formula producers, due to suspicions of bacterial contamination at a factory.

For many children, baby formula is one of their primary, if not only, source of food and nutrition. Although some parents are able to find food alternatives

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NEWS

The Unsettling Side of Maternal Health

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non-Hispanic White women.

“Individuals consuming [processed foods] tend to come from lower socioeconomic statuses and marginalized groups,” says Genesis Perez, a science teacher at Miami Lakes Educational Center.

“People are eating a lot more processed food because of inflation affecting the price of food, and therein lies a tie with gestational diabetes,” Perez continues.

Rates of maternal mortality increased, across the racial board, with maternal age.

The CDC reported that the rate for women over 40 was over 7.8 times higher than the rate for women under age 25. The rate of maternal mortality for women under age is 13.8 deaths per 100,000 live births.

One aspect that differs from the United States’ prenatal and delivery systems and other high income countries is the use of midwives. Midwives are spe-

cialists that take care of the mother and child, especially during the delivery and in the transitional period of the mother from a pregnant woman to a parent.

The Cochrane Library reports that most women should have access to a midwife-led continuity of care, as findings have shown benefits towards mother and child without any adverse effects.

But the availability of midwives in the United States are much smaller in comparison to the availability of obstetrician-gynecologists (OB-GYNS). Private insurance plans do not always cover midwife services, and even if they do, midwives are often unavailable due to such short supply. This leaves women and children in the care of OB-GYNS.

“Midwives can work to close that gap, but collaboration between midwives and OBGYNS is the best way to ensure a healthy delivery is made,” Sasha Davidson, MD, FACOG, said.

Healthy deliveries are not only considered by

the physical state of the child and mother, but by the mental health of the mother. Because of the advance of medicine, giving birth has gotten easier and less emotionally scarring.

“My mom would tell me stories about how my birth was much easier than my older brother’s because she gave birth to him in a different country longer ago, and they wouldn’t give her the right pain suppressants to get through it,” Alex Aulet, a rising senior at Mater Lakes Academy, said.

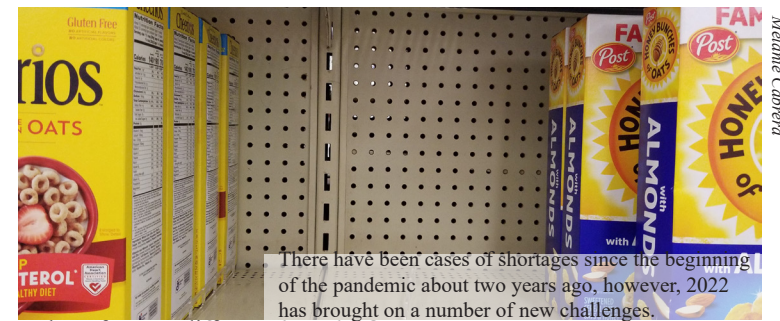
“When it came to my birth, she said it was way easier,” Aulet continued.

Still, the increasing rate in maternal mortality in the United States is significant in comparison to similarly economically developed nations.

Though the CDC report was released in regards to a time period where pregnant women were disproportionately affected, there is a sense of urgency within many to address and resolve this issue across all the demographics it has affected.

Shortages and Food Insecurity in 2022

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There have been cases of shortages since the beginning of the pandemic about two years ago, however, 2022 has brought on a number of new challenges.

or buy from a different brand of baby formula, those who have children with specific allergies or sensitive stomachs may not have those options available.

“As someone who grew up in a country where my family members and those close to me were in a constant struggle to find the bare necessities, it’s almost heartbreaking to have to see it all over again, especially when you realize how latinos are very much disproportionately affected by the shortage,” Yuliana Lopez, a sophomore at MLEC, said.

President Biden has announced that action is being taken to resume formula production back and make up for the shortage. Despite the food shortages much of the world is facing, there are attempts at reducing the impact. Food drives and food banks, for example, have been continuously working since the beginning of the pandemic to feed children and adults, despite difficulties in obtaining certain items. Governments have also taken some actions to minimize the damage this has had on their population. However, at least for now, these shortages persist and more people are facing food insecurity worldwide than in prior years.

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Florida’s Newest Bills Honoring Cuban Exiles

By Anthony Vidal

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May 9th — Florida Governor Ron De Santis signed two new bills into law. These bills are targeted towards the Cuban community in Florida in different aspects.

The first bill signed that day was House Bill 395 (HB 395). This article declares November 7th as “Victims of Communism Day” throughout the state of Florida.

Calling for observation across all public Floridian schools, government classes are required to provide at least 45 minutes of instruction pertaining to “Victims of Communism Day” and “the evils of communism.”

The law mentions that some of the historical events that should be studied are the Cuban Revolution, Chavismo, the Soviet System, Khmer Rouge, and the Cultural Revolution.

The events all highlight times in history where communism has instigated massive

death rates, hunger, and poverty.

“Honoring the people that have fallen victim to communist regimes and teaching our students about those atrocities is the best way to ensure that history does not repeat itself,” Governor Ron DeSantis said in a public statement.

De Santis additionally signed Senate Bill 160 (SB 160), a second article that designates 26 different bridges, highways, roads, and plazas, to honor the passing of some Cuban exiles in Miami-Dade County and as well as the state. Among many of these individuals are police officers, deputies, and veterans who lost their lives during service.

The bill entails the cases of Deputy Sheriff Donta Manuel, Deputy Sheriff Jonathan, Sergeant First Class Michael C. Aten, Deputy William Gentry, Sergeant Eric John Twisdale, and many more.

SB 160 further highlights the lives of Cuban activists, and community organizers such as Oswaldo Payá, Maximino “Maxi” Capdevila Jr, and Arturo Diaz Artiles.

While HB 395 went into

action immediately, SB 160 will go into effect starting July 1st.

However, schools in the country are not required to adhere to this new academic policy until the 2023-2024 school year.



On May 9, 2022, Ron DeSantis signed two bills that honor Cuban efforts against communism.

FEATURE

Is Gen Z the Next Activist Generation?

By Kevin Perez

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The lies that have been spread about Generation Z are unraveling. Today's youth get called lazy and addicted to technology most of the time by society. Previous generations have placed the label of "the future of America" on Generation Z and have continued to pressure them to become better. In this process, the pressure is only increased as they worry Gen Z will not live up to their expectations.

Yet, they seem to be very far off from the truth. Generation (Gen) Z or zoomers, have been the backbone of the large scale protests the world has seen in regards to racial injustice, LGBTQ+ rights, and gun control among other issues. The ones that have driven this effort for change range from 10 to 25 years of age.

With the constant pressure they were raised with, Gen Z has had to adjust to the increasing appearance of issues that are plaguing society. As time passes and problems become

more prevalent, Gen Z has become the generation affected by the issues more than any other.

One prevalent issue in the United States, gun control, has affected Gen Z both physically and mentally more than other generations. Guns are the leading cause of death among American Children and Teens (CDC Gun Mortality Data). Gen Z has been increasingly prone to the danger of guns as mass shootings across America continue to happen, especially in schools, most recently Oxford High-school where four students died and seven others were injured.

Even though a large amount of youth has not been first handedly affected by gun violence, the awareness that the possibility of going to school simply might not be a normal day, has proven enough for them to speak out.

Sparking from the lack of gun control surrounding mass shootings, movements like the March For Our Lives campaign and the #Never-Again movements were formed. "We can't let that fear consume us," said Jaelyn Corin respond-

ing to the hostility from politicians at the March For Our Lives movement in Washington DC.

Most recently, Gen Z has taken the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement into their own hands. In the United States, hundreds of protests to fight racial injustice were run by Gen Z, forming a new form of activism in the process, social media activism.

The interesting aspect comes in where only a small number of Gen Z (12%) attended a protest, but 41% of Gen Z posted in support of the movement on social media, almost double of all other adults at 23%, revealed the Morning Consult.

During the BLM movement, Gen Z organized #Black-OutTuesday which drew millions of people in posting a black screen in support of the movement.

With almost all teenagers and young adults having access to at least one form of social media, they are able to spread word quickly and continue putting issues in the spotlight. When it shows up online, Gen Z has continued to go further and speak on these issues

at home making others around them aware of what is going on.

Social media posts of activism have also been apparent in the LGBTQ+ community. In January of 2022, Florida Governor Ron Desantis introduced the Parental Rights Education Bill which has been largely dubbed as the "Don't Say Gay" Bill.

In response, advocates for the LGBTQ+ community took to social media applications like Twitter and Instagram to speak out against the proposed bill. The controversy in Florida quickly gained national attention, further shining light on the bill.

"We can inspire people who are scared to be them-

selves, spread hope, know they have support, and give people a voice in this world," Roselyn Villanueva, a rising senior at MLEC, said in response to the importance of LGBTQ+ activism against the "Don't Say Gay Bill" and equal rights.

Many students from high schools across Florida participated in organized walk outs that made it onto national publications like USA Today.

Gen Z seems to be paving the way forward as the generation has taken matters into their own hands as the next activist generation with sights set on a better and equal society.



Gen Z has battled criticism and has taken matters into their own hands as the next activist generation. From speaking out on issues like LGBTQ+ rights, gun control, and racial injustice, the youth of today are speaking out for what is right.

Generation Alpha: Children in the Age of Social Media

By Melanie Cabrera

@MelanieCabreraH

Mobile devices have become more important than ever in everyday life. The COVID-19 pandemic left most people with no choice but to work and study from home. Two years later, some remnants of that lifestyle prevails, but it has only boosted what's already existed for years: a dependency on phones, tablets, and laptops.

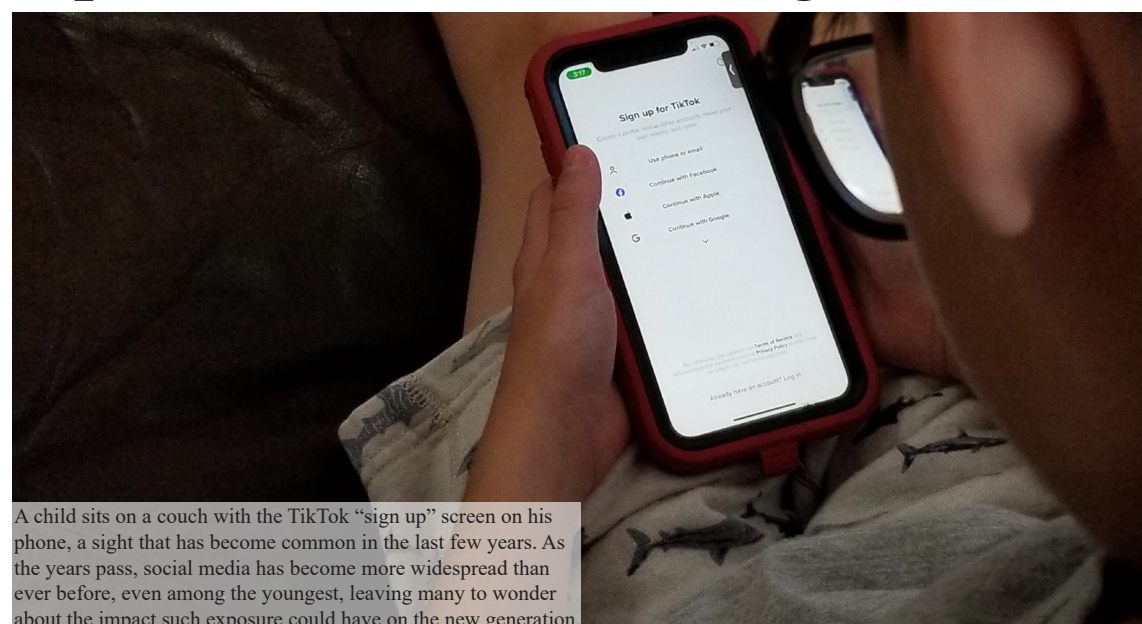
This has come with a steady increase in the popularity and prevalence of social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and Whatsapp. Every day, millions of people share and exchange ideas, pictures, and videos on these apps and websites. According to Statista, there's around 4.65 billion users on social media around the world, which is just shy of the 5 billion who have access to the internet.

The number of people on social media is estimated to increase across all age groups, including in teenagers and even children.

A 2021 report by Common Sense Media found that over 90% of 14-year-olds have their own smartphone. MLEC sophomore Elizabeth Montoyas younger sister falls under that category. According to Elizabeth, her sister got her first phone at the age of eight and spends about six hours on social media every day.

While Elizabeth believes there are more positive aspects than negative ones regarding the platforms, she's noticed that her sister occasionally struggles with her body image and is self-conscious as a result of negative or toxic people on social media.

Elizabeth believes that, "Kids' self-confidence is highly shaped by what they see online. I feel like it affects their mental health when they grow up...in



A child sits on a couch with the TikTok "sign up" screen on his phone, a sight that has become common in the last few years. As the years pass, social media has become more widespread than ever before, even among the youngest, leaving many to wonder about the impact such exposure could have on the new generation.

some ways you wouldn't think of."

Thatsamereportalso noted that 64% of 8-to-12-year olds watch online videos every day, primarily on Youtube and TikTok.

In the U.S., the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act serves to protect children under 13 from online platforms collecting their data without parental consent. This means that most social media platforms don't permit, or at least restrict, users under that age from making accounts.

This doesn't always work, with the New York Times reporting that there are over 18 million TikTok users aged 14 or under, making up over a third of the app's age demographic. This is despite the fact that the app consistently suspends millions of accounts belonging to underaged users, raising questions over the safety and privacy of children.

Children are typically more trusting of things they see or hear, which include false information they see online. They might also be motivated to partake in dangerous activity or provide personal information to strangers online.

"Kids don't have the

cognitive and executive functioning to think through harmful situations and why those might be a bad idea," Dr. Kate Eshleman, a child psychologist, said.

There's also a risk for them to stumble upon gory or otherwise inappropriate images and videos. Music videos and lyrics in particular can contain graphic imagery, particularly regarding violence, drug use, and sexual behavior. These can be commonly found on Youtube and TikTok.

Some apps, like YouTube Kids and Messenger Kids are designed specifically with children in mind. Others have tried to combat the problem by restricting content and applying filters. However, some things are still able to bypass the algorithm and expose children to content that isn't age-appropriate.

This can be combated with parental control, to some degree. In a poll by the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital, 74% of parents consider whether a social media app has parental controls before allowing their children to use it, which can limit the content children are able to see, their screen time, and oth-

er variables. Most parents also stated that they used at least one feature associated with parental control. However, the other 17% of parents didn't use any parental control, with 39% considering it too time consuming.

Sophomore Daniel Hernandez's parents believe in protecting him and his younger sister from social media, so they only have access to YouTube.

Daniel agrees with his parents and believes parents ultimately hold the main responsibility for placing restrictions on social media use in their children, saying that, "companies have a more monetary interest in mind than parents and try to get children to use their platforms as quickly as possible to get them addicted to it so they can sell more ads and other things."

Being on social media can also lead to mental and behavioral problems in children. Children can suffer from anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem when they're on social media. They are exposed to a plethora of posts and individuals online and may compare themselves to others as a result. Chil-

dren can also become irritated.

Regina Palaez, a sophomore at MLEC, can attest to this. She says that her sister "gets very cranky when she's forced to get off her tablet. She always says "just one more video."

In addition, screen time at night has been linked to decreased sleep as well as a hard time sleeping. Children generally require more sleep than teenagers and adults, about 9-10 hours a night, but most only get around 7 hours.

A lack of sleep can have serious consequences, including decreased performance in school and mood swings. It's recommended to stay away from screens at least an hour before bed time. However, screens can be addicting to children, and without proper adult supervision, they may be tempted to stay awake longer.

Social media also has its benefits. Children are able to communicate with others, express opinions, and gain exposure to new and interesting topics. Finding communities of people with similar interests can be beneficial to children's social skills. They might also be able to practice or cultivate important skills, such as their reading abilities.

According to Daniel, not using social media has impacted his sister's friend group, and that, "social media is the main way our generation speaks out about different topics and leave an impact."

Children are becoming increasingly exposed to the world of social media and numbers show that this will only become more prominent with time. Parental control, education and awareness on the topic, and ensuring accountability in the companies producing these apps can make social media a safer place for the next generation as they navigate the web.

Leaving for College: A Parent's Perspective

By Kymani Hughes
@KymaniHughes

Leaving for college is a moment that most parents anticipate and look forward to, but when the time comes for their child to leave the nest, the pain begins.

Eighteen years of raising their children to be self-sufficient and preparing them to face life's joys and sorrows are spent, but most parents still dread the day they drop their child off for the last time and send them off on their journey.

Here's how Nancy Jalbert, mother of Melanie Jalbert, a senior at Miami Lakes Educational Center who will be attending Cornell University in the fall of 2022, is dealing with it.

"I used to live in a cold place, not as cold as Ithaca. I have provided my daughter with tips on what to wear and how to layer, as well as security tips so that she will not get jumped," she recounts.

When college students' parents realize their role has evolved significantly, they can feel reassured that they are still relevant. Parental guidance, mentoring, constructive feedback, and listening to their children are all essential to their success.

It is imperative to continue advising children who are moving to another state (especially a far one) so that the connection remains. In the end, even after getting off the plane, they'll still need their parents. A parent can assist the child in several

ways, including preparing them for negative degree weather.

The other way a parent can handle their child going away is to be supportive. For many college students, college is the beginning of their dreams and their first step into adulthood. Supporting one's child and lending a helping hand can not only help their success, but it can also help one's own emotions knowing that there's faith in them.

"I was always okay with Melanie going out of state to college. Ever since she was a little girl, she has been very clear that she wants to go away for school. While I wasn't expecting upstate New York, I knew she was leaving home one day," Mrs. Jalbert continued.

Lack of preparation is another factor that contributes to parental worry and anxiety, along with distance and empty nest syndrome. Students and parents can become so consumed with college applications, scholarships, and financial aid that they forget to prepare for the upcoming lifestyle changes and how to adjust to them.



Preparing to say goodbye to your child as they leave for college is difficult, but Melanie Jalbert and her mother Nancy are prepared to face Ithaca and college head on.

Melanie Jalbert

Parents with concerns about campus safety or culture can attend campus tours, ask questions, and take special note of campus resources. In the case of concerns related to a student's

transition to dorm life, parents can meet roommates and Resident Advisers/Assistants (RA's). "As a mom, I've already talked to my daughter about seeing each other during long breaks, like Christmas and Thanksgiving,

so we can still celebrate together, and I'll be there for Parent Weekend as well. Don't be afraid of your child leaving. Plan, prepare and provide what you can, and they will be ready for their new journey," Mrs. Jalbert said.





Marian Leon

"In college applications, extracurricular activities are taken into consideration, so if you're interested in any clubs or after-school programs, you should definitely participate."

Reann Nicolas

"Instead of taking AP classes, enroll in Dual Enrollment courses. Dual enrollment is easier and has the same effect on your GPA as AP courses, which are way harder and can affect your GPA more."

Rebecca Noel

"If you have certifications, study, study, study, especially if you are in the Medical Assisting strand or just the Health Academy in general. Learn the concepts, remember the material, and you will pass."

Kazon Allen

"Befriend your teachers and establish a connection with them so they will be willing to help with any favors, such as community service or referrals."

Juan Cruz

"Try and take a test early on to get an idea of what it's like, so that way, in your second or third, you're able to get them out as soon as possible."

Melody Clarette

"Be open to new experiences, and don't be scared to come out of your shell because you're only in high school once, and just be nice to everybody."



sincerely,
C/O 2022



The Ultimate Summer Guide for Rising Seniors

By Kevin Perez
@kevinp305

Junior year, the arguably hardest academic year in the K-12 track, is finally coming to a close as current juniors now become rising seniors and have their sights set on college.

College applications are a yearly process usually beginning at the start of senior year, during August and September. However, it is never too early to get ahead by researching essay topics and furnishing resumes.

"Be focused on your goals because it's easy to become unmotivated, but if you have a clear idea of what you want, you will be able to maintain your focus," Laura Castellanos, MLEC's Student Government Association Treasurer, told The Harbinger.

Common App, the undergraduate college admission application, is accepted by hundreds of colleges and universities in the United States and around the world. The application involves completing a personal essay among seven choices and lets users know if certain colleges require their own supplemental essays.

Essays are meant to add personality to the student, offering insight on who they are that might not be apparent on the official application. Colleges look for more than just test scores, they look for what students can offer them, and essays fulfill just that.

For those universities that do not accept common apps, like MIT and Loyola University of Chicago, students can access applications through the school's respective under-

graduate admissions website. SAT/ACT test score requirements vary by university. Most students take their first exam in the spring of their junior year and then again in the summer or beginning of their senior year.

These test scores are often essential to applications, as they provide another opportunity for students to stand out. There are several physical and online resources that can help students improve their scores, like the Princeton review book, which offers in-depth help for either exam.

"Try and take a test early on to get an idea of what it's like so that way in your second or third you're able to get them out as soon as possible," Juan Cruz, a graduating Engineering student, explained.

While the importance of test scores and essays cannot be undermined, supplemental information can also go a long way.

"Standardized tests do not define your intelligence or who you are," Melanie Vasquez, a rising freshman at Boston College, said.

Universities are always looking for students who stand out and excel in their interests. The option to add additional documents is the perfect opportunity for that.

You must trust yourself and follow your own path, going the extra mile whenever you can," Lorena Vasquez, a graduating senior who will be attending Miami-Dade College, added.

Most of the time, this section is filled with resumes that offer a short but detailed summary

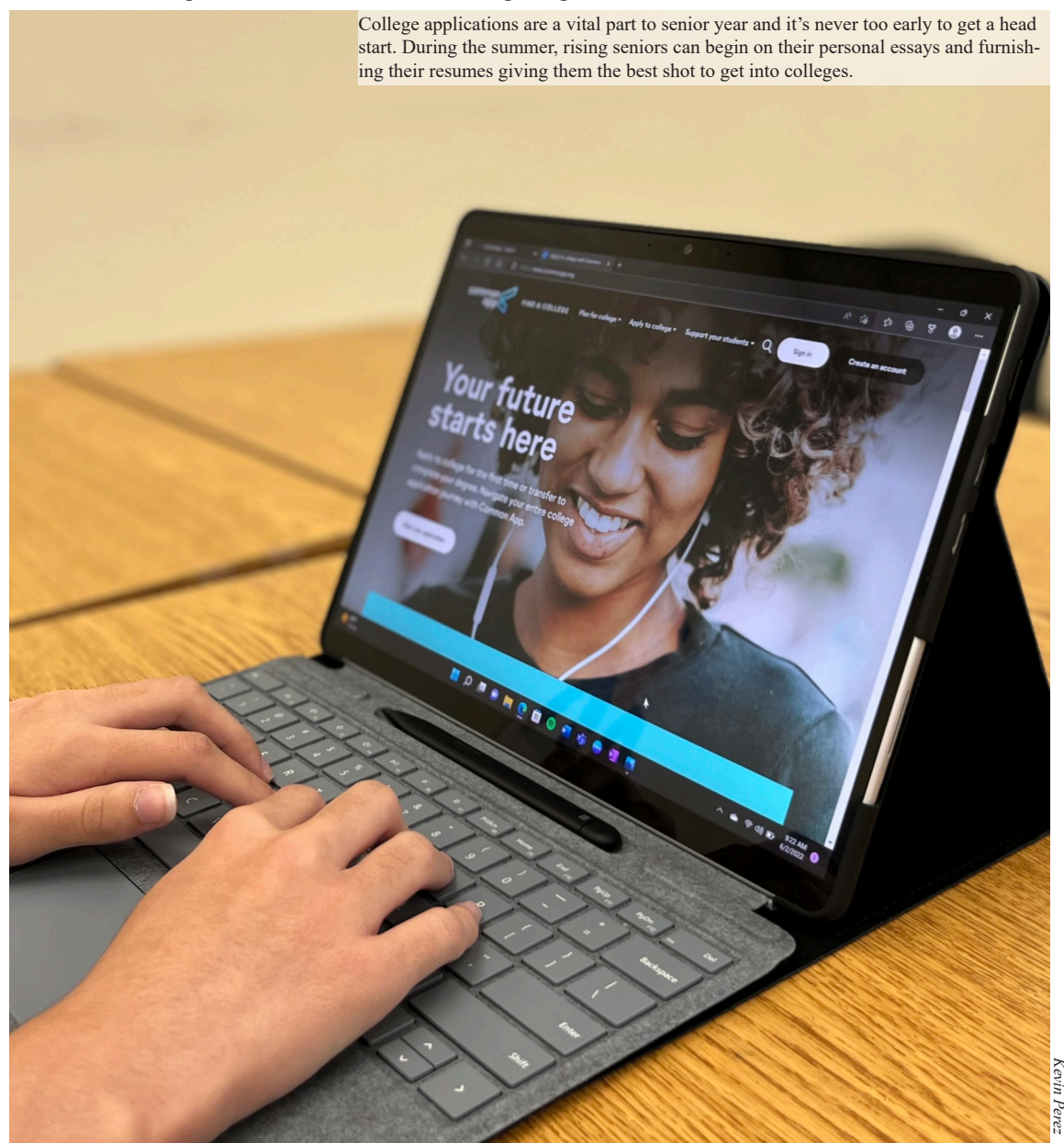
of a student's skills, experience, and education. During the transition summer from junior to senior year, students should take time to round out their resume, if started already. Websites like Canva and Word have simple templates to assist with creating their resume.

College applications are a lengthy and stressful process, meaning they should be planned with time.

All aspects of the application are important and are to be done thoroughly to ensure the best chance of getting into which-

ever university one dreams of. "My summer extracurricular activities looked great on my resume, and I was able to get into some really good schools because I went the extra mile to participate in different activities," Lorena continued.

College applications are a vital part to senior year and it's never too early to get a head start. During the summer, rising seniors can begin on their personal essays and furnishing their resumes giving them the best shot to get into colleges.



FEATURE

Beyond High School

By Valentina Foglia
 @Vale_Foglia13

Throughout the four years, seniors have worked day and night nonstop while dealing with drama, family struggles, and mental health. It is a period of making and breaking relationships.

There are individuals who have lost lifelong childhood friends due to issues arising during high school.

Seniors create bonds that are forever lasting — bonds so strong that a few are willing to change paths in life to stay close to their friends. Bonds that allow them to count on each other.

“I have known my best friend Dezirah since elementary and we still continue to have a strong bond. The key to making friendships last is to always check up on them or the bond will fade away, and respect each other,” Kazon Allen, a graduating senior in Communications, said.

“If you can’t respect each other then the relationship will become toxic, making a bad friendship.”

A part of creating a lasting friendship comes from knowing that one can count on the other whenever they are in need.

If plans are made, but last-minute issues come up then a friend should be willing to understand and not get mad. A friend should understand that if it’s been a hard day, they should reach out and be there.

Knowing that one can count on each other makes

it easier to put in the effort to stay in contact with each other after high school, allowing them to withstand anything life throws at the friendship.

If only one side of the friendship is reaching out, chances are that the effort is going to go to waste.

A friendship has to be equal amongst all, otherwise, the bond will begin to fade.

“I believe there comes a time when if the situation is not that serious, we can let bygones be bygones and move on. We’re all getting older and I myself don’t want to leave high school feeling like I have enemies,” Kasha Finley, a senior in Entrepreneurship, said.

A friendship with an equal balance of effort is more likely to create happy, long lasting memories than a friendship that is one-sided.

“This is a new start and I just feel if you can let it go and enjoy the moments left then do that. We don’t have to be friends but we can all be people who want each other to win in life and continue lifting one another up,” she continued.

A happy friendship varies from person to person. There are many people that, despite the drama and issues that they have gone through, are willing to forgive and move on. It takes all sides to be able to work through the problems.

“Life’s too short for me to fall out with my homegirls right now. I just want to have fun.”

Pulitzer Prize Winners

By Sofia Palomino
 @Sofia_p4

The Pulitzer Prize has been around for over 100 years, uplifting journalists, authors, poets, composers, and their impactful work.

The award developed as an outlet of recognition that brought light upon the social and cultural aspects of the country. Many of the pieces, whether they pertained to journalism or literature, tell a compelling story about American past and current events.

Its creator, Joseph Pulitzer, was a highly esteemed publisher that changed the social view of journalistic work and literature, making it a respected part of American culture. Columbia University manages the Pulitzer Prize through a jury system and board members.

Several authors, journalists, and poets have been recognized for their hard work and became important figures in American society.

The poet Robert Frost embodies the ideals and importance of the Pulitzer Prize as he received four Pulitzer awards throughout his career, his work continuing to be prominent among the literature community.

The Pulitzer Prize is most recent winners were announced on May 9, 2022.

Currently, the prestigious award has 21 categories in total that fall within three main groups—Journalism, Special Citations, and Letters, Drama, &

Music. These categories have been altered over the years to align with the new technology and include the different media of writing.

Journalism is the largest group, with 15 categories that recognize the different aspects of reporting, photography, and writing. These categories highlight individual journalists and publications alike, depending on the topic or event that they covered.

The Miami Herald was awarded their 23rd Pulitzer Prize, Breaking News Reporting, for their timely and wide-range reporting on the sudden collapse of the south Champlain Tower in Surfside.

The prize recognized the newsroom since there were 37 journalists that contributed.

“As a newsroom, we poured our hearts into the breaking news and the ongoing daily coverage, and subsequent investigative coverage, of the Champlain Towers South condominium collapse story,” Monica Richardson, the Miami Herald Executive Editor, said in a statement to her publication.

This sudden event sent a shocking wave over the city of Miami, and the Miami Herald was there every step of the way to document and share the development of the story.

The other main group of the prize, Letter, Drama, and Music, recognizes the achievements of a wide variety of works. This group includes the categories of Drama, History, and General Nonfiction amongst others that

cover different types of writing styles like novels and plays.

An investigative reporter for the New York Times, Andrea Elliot, received the General Nonfiction Pulitzer Prize for her novel, *Invisible Child: Poverty, Survival, & Hope in an American City*. The narrative is based on the coming of age of Dasani, a resilient girl that takes on the struggle of life in New York City as she faces homelessness, hunger, and racism.

The novel, a leading example of what the Pulitzer Prize stands for, brought more attention to prevalent social issues.

The esteemed award has set aside a special group, Special Awards and Citations, to highlight those who have contributed to the community by reporting on an event or incorporating social and cultural problems in their work.

This year, the Pulitzer Board is recognizing the journalists of Ukraine for their resilience and dedication to the industry as well as the people of their country.

They have maintained coverage on the leading events of the war despite the hardships and dangers.

Each category aims to bring forth the best journalistic work and writing pieces of the country.

The Pulitzer Prize has grown to become one of the highest awards for the writers of today, and the annual awards have ignited hundreds of conversations amongst the public and in the world of literature.



Sasha Davidson, M.D., MBA, FACOG
 Maternal Fetal Medicine
 Obstetrics & Gynecology
Silver Knight Nominee 1995

From one Silver Knight to another, continue to chase excellence!

I was a Silver Knight Nominee at North Miami Beach Senior High School in 1995. At the time, I was ecstatic about entering the health field to truly make a difference in the lives of others. Over time, with continuous education, endurance and noble wisdom, my passion for medicine grew. I went on to complete my medical education at Georgetown University and my OBGYN training at Johns Hopkins.

Today, I am the Medical Director of Signature Perinatal Center, specializing in High Risk Pregnancy as a Maternal Fetal Medicine Physician in the heart of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Congratulations to the 2022 Silver Knight Winners and Nominees. A word of encouragement: never limit yourself! You are overflowing with intelligence and discipline that will allow you to fulfill your dreams, change narratives, and pave the way for others.

Continue to persevere and you will succeed!

EDITORIAL

Overturing Roe v. Wade — A Woman’s Tragedy

By Carlineissa Jean-Francois
 @CarlineissJ

Having access to abortion should not be a matter of discussion. The majority of people trying to enforce stricter abortion laws are predominantly men in power who should not be making decisions for women when they have no female reproductive organs.

Roe v. Wade is a landmark Supreme Court case that ruled over the constitutionality of a woman’s reproductive rights. The case began when Norma McCorvey sued the Texas attorney general on the grounds that banning abortions was unconstitutional.

The Supreme Court concluded that a woman could decide whether or not they wanted an abortion without excessive government or state restrictions.

However, in the last year, many states have banned abortions altogether and have restricted the period when a woman is eligible for one.

States including Texas, Mississippi, Florida, Oklahoma, and Arizona are just some of the ones that have placed tight restrictions on abortions.

The Center for Disease Control revealed that the abor-

Men have long dominated the legislative bodies, putting at stake the reproductive fate of women across various states — from Texas and Mississippi to Florida, Oklahoma, and Arizona. However, that banning abortions altogether will not decrease the number of procedures overall.



Anna Monowade/Getty Images

tion rate was 11.4 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15–44 years, and the abortion ratio was 195 abortions per 1,000 live births.

The number of people getting abortions will not decrease. It is something that has been around for decades. Therefore, placing these restrictions will only make abortions unsafe, negatively impacting a woman’s body.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), unsafe abortions can lead to maternal death as well as mental and physical complications. Therefore, illegal or unsafe abortions

are a significant public health issue and shouldn’t be taken lightly.

Roe v. Wade is important as it pertains to human rights, and it is a matter of liberty. But unfortunately, a Supreme Court draft was leaked to the general public last month that reinstates the possibility of Roe v. Wade being overturned. The leaked draft has created an uproar in the nation and has divided the country.

The tense political climate has increased, with parties divided into pro-life or pro-choice. The majority of the people who are against abortion

are known as pro-life. Those who are pro-life believe that regardless of the situation, the fetus is considered a human, thus making abortions murder.

Gabriela Maldonado, a junior at MLEC, is pro-life and is not in agreement with abortions. She believes that a child is a human regardless of the stage of pregnancy. The overall idea is that life begins at conception, not when someone decides the child/fetus is alive.

“In my opinion, I oppose abortion because I firmly believe that life begins at conception. If scientifically we think that a cell is the smallest unit of life, why is there reason to believe that a zygote, embryo, or even fetus composed of billions of cells, is not a living being?”

“Studies show that a child in the mother’s womb reacts to external factors. It’s like when a mother reads or talks to the child in the womb. There is research that the baby responds to the voice of the mother or the father. So they are adding to the fact that the child has a conscience,” said Maldonado

Some people disagree with Gabriela and consider themselves to be pro-choice. People

who are pro-choice believe that women should have the right to decide since it is their bodies. These supporters also believe that even though they may not want an abortion, the government should not take away anyone’s choice.

Juliana Moquete, another junior at MLEC, is pro-choice. She wants women to have a choice over their bodies because they are the ones who have to provide for that child once it’s born.

“I support abortion because women should choose what to do with their bodies. Although I would never get one, I would like to have the choice as a young woman.”

“Having a child is a huge responsibility, and we should have the choice of having one. However, no woman can call herself free who does not control her own body,” said Moquete.

If what the draft proposed becomes a reality, women will lose their rights. Instead of progressing as a nation, the U.S. takes a step back and repeats history. The draft is a clear reminder of how quickly things can change for society.

Overturing Roe v. Wade could be a histor-

Is Rock Taking Over K-pop?

By Angely Pena
 @angelypena06

Following the spread of Korean music and culture internationally, also known as the Hallyu Wave, many K-pop artists have begun to include influences from other music styles in the recent comebacks to appeal to international audiences.

However, it is important to note that K-pop in itself isn’t just one sound — it is a string of trends, anything popular in music, or a mix of different styles of music. Korean pop is also inclusive to K-R&B.

Many artists have been including rock influences in their music, specifically groups such as Day6, DreamCatcher, and N.Flying. However, recent comebacks, or recent debuts and releases, have featured more rock influences.

Be it soft, punk, or pop rock, K-pop artists have come to experiment with rock elements in their music. This makes a shift for people that may enjoy both genres or people that solely listen to rock are now being represented in K-pop.

This shift in sound results in more diversity in terms of musicality and, frankly, features more head-bangers and hard-hitting music.

In contrast to the same sounds, which are already heard in mainstream American pop, the inclusion of rock in many K-pop songs is different and that’s why it works.

In contrast to many American artists that simply experiment with songs, K-pop groups change their entire concept to match the

songs they are promoting.

A prime example of this being Hybe Labels boy group, Tomorrow By Together, or TXT, which has constantly morphed their concept to match their music. This means that they change their entire persona as a group, their overall vibe in terms of costume and visuals, and most importantly, their dances.

TXT is a great example of this, as they first started with more of a soft pop sound, which may have been seen as cutesy, but around their album titled *The Dream Chapter: Eternally*, they changed concepts and included rock influences in their music.

Their track *Eternally* was a perfect blend between their old pop and entrancing music, to then shifting to rock which blended their two concepts and showed a transition.

This was then followed by the album series *The Chaos Chapter* in which both albums heavily used rock, and then this concept also made it into their most recent album *Minisode 2: Thursday’s Child*.



TOMORROW x TOGETHER

Korean pop is more than just a genre, it includes a string of trends that feature the dynamic aspect of different musical themes — and the Rock genre now bears the greatest influence as of yet.

Rock has made a comeback in the American industry which has ultimately led to other K-pop groups and artists to include in their music.

Songs such as *You & I*, *I Miss You*, and *Fly High* by DreamCatcher are very similar to anime openings that use similar, fast-paced tempo and guitar-based melodies found in the rock genre. Other songs include *Stop the Rain* by Day6, *Tomboy* by G-Idle, *Lxxk 2 U* by Yena, *Fantasy* by PINK FANTASY, and *LOSER=LOVER* by TXT.

This style, characterized by strong beats, mimics the theme of tunes associated with anime openings, which is a very popular appeal to Western audiences using Japanese rock music.

K-pop fans overall tend to enjoy more of a dark concept in their music and many groups who started their promotions and debuted as a rock based group slowly rose to popularity, including DreamCatcher and Day6, leaving the rest of the industry to adjust to a popularized style of music.

THE HARBINGER

Publication Policy

MLEC’s Harbinger staff pledges to: Publish articles that will not disparage any individual and will not interfere with the rights of privacy. We publish this newspaper for the student body, faculty, and community members. No articles will convey bias or be based on personal motives. We will not take credit for the work and publication of others. Any opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the faculty and administration but rather those of the newspaper staff and its editors. MLEC’s Harbinger is intended to inform, entertain, and communicate to the public in an open forum.

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Moving Forward With A “Goodbye”

By Fabiha Faruque

🐦 @FabihaFaruque

I once met an elderly woman in the elevator of an apartment building. It was roughly 6:30 AM on a school week. Following a brief moment of silence, she inquired about my age and grade level. Early into the 2018-19 school year, I was just a freshman in high school back then.

“Enjoy while you can,” I recall her saying. “The years will pass by quickly, and before you know, it’s over.”

The elevator soon came to a stop, the doors slid open, and we both went about our separate ways. Just as quickly as our conversation started, it ended.

I began high school in Pharmacy, determined to pave a road for myself in the elite world of medicine. It comes as a surprise to most people when they hear that I started off by memorizing medical terminology and bedside manners — a revelation even.

Perhaps I could have stayed there, entering clinical rounds like I have always dreamed of doing and becoming a certified technician or something similar within the next four years. But, I didn’t. Instead, I chose a life of acute deadlines and storytelling, interviewing influential figures, and supporting one large family.

From the very begin-

ning, it was my desire to pursue research that lured me into Journalism. Mrs. Mezawi and Michelle, a C/O ‘21 alumni who was a mentor of mine, presented me the opportunity to explore and experiment out in the fields — a calling toward greater opportunities. I haven’t regretted my decision for a single moment.

I entered Journalism during my sophomore year anxious, petrified to reside among a sea of talented writers and charismatic editors who knew many things that I did not, who controlled the flow of our activities and conversations about current events.

That is because, to me, journalism was more than just putting together a story for the public — it was about seeking the truth, taking charge, and expanding horizons — shaping me into the person that I have become today. I went from the quiet, introverted girl in the corner to a writer ready to conquer the world. Not only did I learn how to manage stress, but I also honed my skills to lead, communicate, and build empathy by perceiving myself in the shoes of others.

Originally, I thought everyone in the class were just cynical scrutineers, desensitized by the constant cycle of violence and worldly turmoil; the cream of the crop, as they were considered.

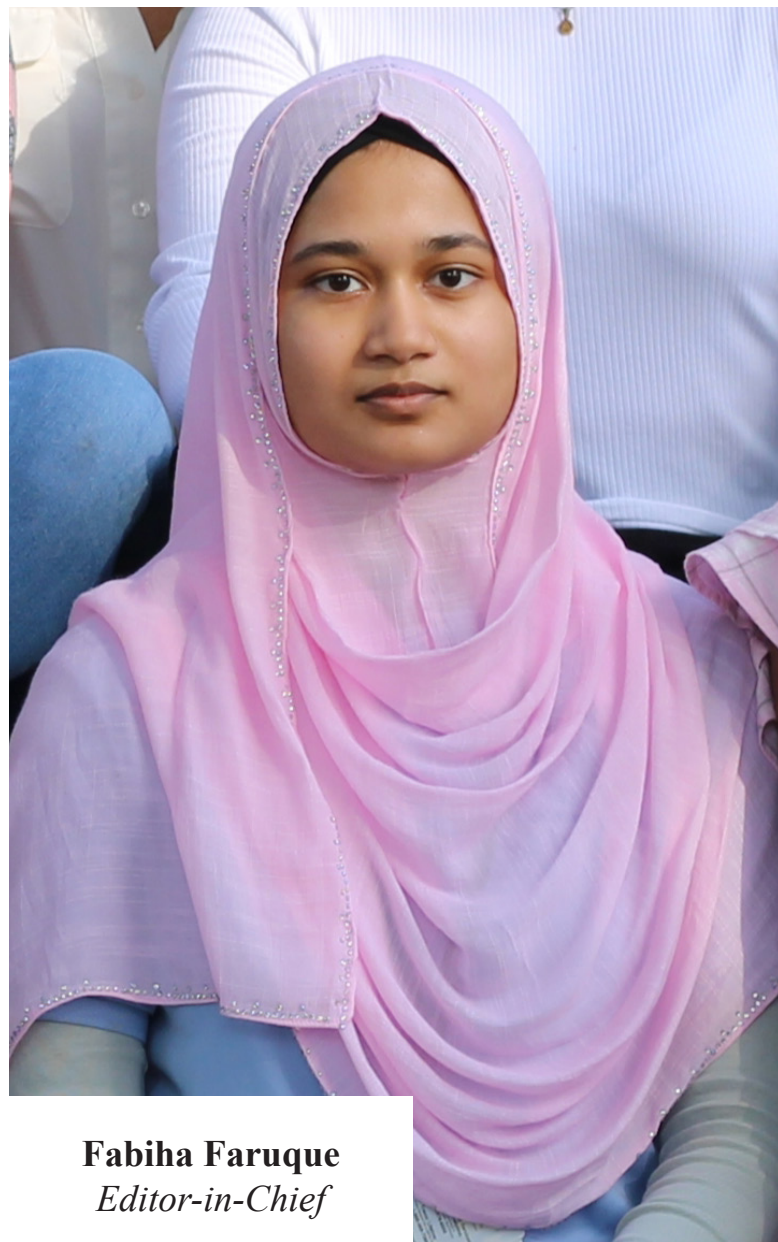
I was wrong. By pledging themselves to facts, they were a beacon of hope to their community, a sea of walking contradictions.

Room 5207 would become a warm asylum where I can joke around and laugh to my heart’s content. It is the safe haven I would turn to during my lunch breaks, and the sanctuary where I would spend my time contacting businesses for money and editing newspaper articles.

The past three years have been a chaotic thrill — from interviewing congresswomen and victims of gun violence to capturing life amid a pandemic; and, this year, rebuilding our newspaper following an era of drastic changes induced by lockdowns.

The Pink Room, now painted white, is still the same place where we celebrated every event — and each other. It was a blessing in this life to have crossed paths with Mrs. Borges, who guided us to each our own glory, and Mrs. Green, who showed us that the art of writing is in the revising.

It’s hard to believe how quickly time has spurred by. The woman in the elevator was indeed more correct than I have ever considered her to be back then. Now, here I am, bidding farewell to the “Not-So-Pink-Room” — to my home, my second family, and *The Harbinger*.



Fabiha Faruque
Editor-in-Chief



Kelly Sanchez
Managing Editor

New Beginnings

By Kelly Sanchez

🐦 @kwllqq

Dear Reader,

It’s *The Harbinger*’s Managing Editor. Being a leader means so much more than I could have ever possibly imagined when I first got the position. And, yes, it was extremely difficult. However, I want to use this space to reflect on the love I have for this publication instead.

When I first walked into the Pink Room, Mrs. Borges was the advisor at the time and she took me under her wing. She

taught me everything I know, along with all the other past leaders in this class. They shaped me into who I am and made me love journalism. If it wasn’t for them, I wouldn’t be where I am right now.

This newspaper that you may or may not read is so much more than just a piece of paper. It’s the staff’s blood, sweat, and tears that goes into making this work. And it changed my life for the better.

Writing has always been my safe haven. And *The Harbinger* provided me an outlet to express myself, tell important

stories, and make a difference. I will never forget the impact that *The Harbinger* made on my life.

I think it goes without saying that I would also like to thank Mrs. Green for helping us move forward when we were all lost and confused as to whether we were even going to continue having a journalism strand.

Thank you to my family, friends, and partner for continuing to motivate me on this journey as Managing Editor. I couldn’t have done it without you. Thank you, everyone.
Sincerely, Kelly.