

Congratulations, Class of '23!



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF PHS NJROTC

Part of the goal of Fleet Week is for our PHS cadets to meet and discuss career opportunities with currently serving sailors.

PHS Cadets Participate in Fleet Week

By Enyerly Reyes

The PHS ROTC was fortunate enough to participate in the annual event held in New York City, called Fleet Week. This event has been going on for over forty years. Held to help commemorate Memorial Day, the festivities of Fleet Week gives New Yorkers and anyone from around the area a chance to see and marvel at the wonderful ships of the United States Navy.

The Navy is more than just ships; it is the men and women who work together to make this the best navy in the world. PHS cadets were able to meet and speak with many sailors, as well as Marines and Coastguardsmen. It was a fun day to be in the city and get the

chance to learn more about the Navy as well as the many ships that make up the modern Navy. Seeing these ships and talking with sailors was a chance for PHS cadets to bring the information about the naval services to life instead of just reading about it in a textbook.

Senior Juan Rios said, "It was just a fun day to be with my friends in the city. The ships are awesome and the sailors we met were so nice."

This is the second time the event has been held in person because 2020 and 2021 were virtual due to the Covid 19 pandemic. However, "The U.S. Navy is excited to be back in New York to showcase how the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard provide us

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The USS Wasp, which is home for sailors and marines from all over the country. USS Wasp (LHD-1) is a United States Navy multipurpose amphibious assault ship, and the lead ship of her class. She is the tenth USN vessel to bear the name since 1775, with the last two ships named Wasp being aircraft carriers; this ship's homeport is Norfolk, Virginia.

Mrs. Yago Takes Science Classes Fishing

By Enyerly Reyes

Normally, many students are uninterested in going on the field trip the moment they hear about "hiking" "fishing" and especially "science teacher". However, this field trip was anything but boring; it was entertaining, educational, interesting, and fun. We went from stocking a pond with new fish, seeing preserved animals, and learning about different wild plants, to learning how to fish on our own and catching our own fish. Seeing the science life cycles was much more interesting in person than just by reading about it in a book.

The experience was very beautiful and interesting. We were learning so much about the wildlife, how the fish are raised. The life cycle of fish is fascinating. We also learned about the relationship between the fishery and the plants that surround it. Using smell, which is impossible to get from a book or even on the internet, there were a lot of species of plants that some people used to cook or make medicine that can be identified by how they smell.

One of the most interesting areas was when we were first introduced to what the wildlife looked like, how many animals lived, and how they survived during the



PHOTOS BY ENYERLY REYES

A setting that serves a purpose is this feeder stream to the hatchery.

winter or summer seasons, on a short hike. After walking up, we discovered there used to be a train track that used to pass by. But after its shutdown, it got covered with plants and roots, revitalizing the area that had been abandoned for many years. Nature reclaimed the area that was disturbed by the train. There were also some streets, but the plants have outgrown the area with trees, plants, and flowers, which now make the animals their home.

Along the hike we were introduced to many facts about trees, especially how the trees and other plants are necessary for the animal life in the area. For example, some dead trees can be used as animal shelters, and if they get cut down, it is probably the

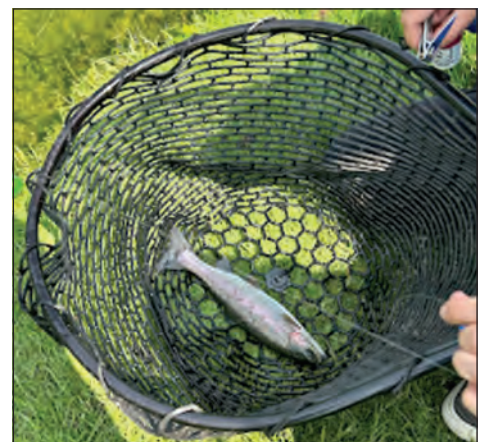
best because no other plants around them would get damaged. Forest management is important because people can help maximize the relationship between the forest and all the animals who call it home.

In late winter and early spring, there are people who go to maple trees to get the sap that will be turned into maple syrup. They use a device that can milk out the syrup and produce it so people can eat it and enjoy it with their pancakes or waffles. Interesting, but there were not any samples of maple syrup.

At the end of the long walk through
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Pequest Trout Hatchery and Wildlife Refuge was a wonderful destination for the science field trip.



This whale of a fish that I caught was lucky enough to be released back to the pond.

Art in the City of Passaic

By Mario Luna

The city of Passaic thrives off its identity, being a diverse community, and much of it is clearly shown throughout the city, in different restaurants serving cuisine that originated from many places. Simply walking around the city you sense the many different nationalities that you get exposed to and maybe consumed as you walk the streets of Passaic. One of the biggest ways this city expresses itself is the art that pops up around. Walking down the streets it is not hard to find a mural here and one there, and although many residents of Passaic may walk by them without a second thought, many of them represent a huge group of people and tell stories from different backgrounds and they represent a great deal of work, effort and talent.

This mural on the wall of the Mexican restaurant “El Jardin”, on the corner of Main Ave and Monroe, shows the true Mexican Beauty, the drinking culture of the country, as well as Mexican legends such as Frida Kahlo, a Mexican artist known for paintings such as Frieda and Diego Rivera, she was very well known for her self-portraits as well and has become a very recognizable face in Mexico, mostly recognized by her eyebrows. This mural also includes Vicente Fernandez, a musical icon, a very well known music artist from Mexico with songs like “Si Te Vas No Hay Lio”, he is someone almost everyone from Mexico knows. The significance of this mural is to put on display what Mexican culture is about and show the colorful nature of the people of Mexico. There is a large Mexican population in the

city of Passaic, and murals such as this one helps represent them.

The mural located on the side of Legur Auto and Tire shop, shows an Incan legend of Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo, a legend originating from the Incan Empire (now Peru). It is a story of the two children of Inti (the sun) who were sent to bring order and civilization to humankind. The two came from Lake Titicaca to create a city, that city being Cusco and the path created is known as the first Inka Road. This mural helps represent the different Hispanic cultures found in a small city like Passaic, as there is also a big Peruvian population in the city, and helps represent the people of Peru with this stunning mural. Displaying the legends created by civilizations centuries ago, it makes a person stop and look at the mural, learning the history of the stories left by the Incas.

The wall of art located on the side of Noble, a well known sneaker store in Passaic located on the corner of Jefferson Street and Hoover Avenue, does not represent a country or ethnicity, and it does not represent a singular person. It represents something that any person can be a part of no matter their color or where they or their parents may be from. This wall is covered in graffiti, a street art created in the 1960's in the cities of New York City and Philadelphia. Graffiti has helped immortalize many legends such as Phase 2 (Lonny Wood) known as the one that started bubble letters in this art. Graffiti was also the form of art that created the iconic Jean-Michel Basquiat who started off doing graffiti under the name SAMO. Basquiat is one of the best and



PHOTOS BY MARIO LUNA

Top: Wall of art on the side of Noble, a well-known sneaker store located on the corner of Jefferson Street and Hoover Avenue.

Right: Mural on the wall of a Mexican restaurant, El Jardin

Bottom: Mural located on the side of Legur Auto and Tire shop.

most well known artists in modern pop-culture history and his origin was poetic graffiti around New York City. In this art, who you are and where you're from does not matter, this wall helps represent that idea in Passaic, we are all a community. With the help of the wall we see different styles of tags, visuals of a spinning roller coaster, a character very reminiscent of the Joker, this wall is well known in the city and it originates from a beautiful form of art.

As you go about your business in the city of Passaic, take the time to look around. There is so much art and culture around the city. So, get your eyes out of your phone and look at the passion for life that is all around us. The stories, cultures and passion of the people are literally written and painted on the walls of the city. It represents cultures and most importantly, it represents us and our city. The art of the people of Passaic.



Minga App Update

By Bramdy Guzman

The Minga pass system has been in force for a while now, so an accurate assessment can be made of this system. This will be an informal assessment by students, teachers and even security team members about the effectiveness of Minga here at PHS.

The Minga app was initially created and used to communicate more with students and parents, so it's easier to give announcements. But from experience, it is being used to create hall passes to be easier for teachers to write students a pass. But that's not the only feature this app has. For example, the students won't have to worry about losing their ID because the app provides a clear image of it on your phone.

For the teachers, it shows how many people are in certain locations, and for last the hall pass tool. The promise for this system was that it would not only make the job of keeping track of students easier for teachers and administrators, but also for students and security personnel.

Opinions on the app

Andreina Alcantara - Senior

- “I don't like it because I don't have space on my phone, and I cannot download the app. I am a senior and don't have lunch and the app doesn't have the option of lunch so I cannot eat until I'm out of the school.”

Eneyerly Perez - Senior

- “It took some getting used to, but now that it has been a

while, this system is pretty easy and it's like we have been doing it forever.”

Matthew Brocato - Senior

- “I hate using technology when a simple piece of paper does just fine. But I know why they did it. We should just do what we are supposed to and then things will run smoothly.”

Paris Rojas - Sophomore

- “It doesn't sit right with me because it takes more time making the pass and if you don't have it you have to use your chromebook and it is annoying.”

Mrs. Schutlz - Spanish

- “Minga behaves like any technology element. It is a resource whose identity depends on the use and exploitation that is given to it, if management invests the time and energy necessary to use it. On the other hand, if you do not invest in the approval of said data, Minga runs the risk of becoming an excuse and will go to the arc of things that could be very useful, they are replaced by the new little account expected in fashion at the moment data it collects, it has the potential to become an agile and practical tool.”

Mr. Schleer - History

- “I love it because now we know where everyone is at all times (safety first). Also, it is easier for me and less time being distracted by pass-making.”

Security team opinions

- “The app seems nice and I see it making teachers' lives easier.”
- “It's already making a change in the hallways, and



I hope that in the future this may work even better.”

- “Seems pretty good to me, even though it has its cons.”

While there is still some disagreement on the use of this app for passes, no one said that it does not work. It has only been a short while and this system is already like second nature to most of us.

Starting in September this is the new normal for all of us and it will be the only way we can get a pass to do anything. More features will be coming online and that means more ease of use during the day for students who are going to games or practices. This system has a lot of promise, now that we are getting the hang of it.

Of the students who said they hate it, perhaps they should consider that it is meant to keep track of them. Of course, kids do not like to see new rules and the enforcement of those rules, but here we are.

We should take Matthew Brocato's advice and just “do what we are supposed to do,” and then everything will work out fine.

PASSAIC PULITZER

Student Recognition for Contributions to Hilltop Star

By H. Zeiler

I would like to take a moment to highlight some of the amazing accomplishments of the Hilltop Star staff this year. The 2022-2023 school year has been the most prolific in the history of the city of Passaic schools. Not only did the staff produce four full-sized issues of the Hilltop Star, but they produced the first digital edition newsletter as well. Eight issues of Smoke Signal were produced and well received by the students and staff of PHS. New features like the monthly poll, featured student of the month, Guidance Suite, and sports schedules have helped get the word out about the amazing things going on here at PHS.

Some student reporters have gone above and beyond their required tasks to excel in PHS journalism. One of the greatest skills of a good reporter is asking the good questions and finding the stories that need to be told, even if they are hard to tell. Mario Luna has this skill and needs to be recognized for his contributions to the publication this year. His centerfold feature, investigative report about the reality of homelessness in Passaic is the best feature of the year. Mario's interview and hard questions exposed the reality of a problem that many would rather avoid. Please see the centerfold of the spring issue (v. 61, no.2, p. 3-4) of the Hilltop Star, to see excellent reporting and writing.

Thank you, Mario, for your contribution, talent and effort.

The paper is made up of more than stories. Photographs have often brought the stories to life. Michael Castro should be thanked for his term as chief photographer. His photos contributed to many stories and formed the central role of others. Candid photography of the food bank this past holiday season was notably exceptional. A story about providing food for the needy was great, but the photographs of teachers, students and national guard members working to make the lives of many in the city of Passaic better, were fantastic. Thank you, Michael, for your photographic talent, as well as your contributions throughout the year on articles, reviews of movies and games, and just being a wonderful addition to the staff.

PHS has many sports to offer. It is a great way to build teamwork and be a part of the PHS community. Recognizing the efforts of the massive amount of teams and variety of sports is the job of the sports team. Their effort and dedication to representing all the sports of PHS this season should be recognized. Sports editors Merian Villanueva and Desiree Santana, as well as Sheila Inoa and Matthew Garcia, made this one of the best years for sports coverage ever. Their coverage went so deep as to overfill the pages of the print and digital editions, to include

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Super Mario Bros. Movie brings favorite game to the big screen

By Katherine Robinson

The Mario Brothers games have that certain something that makes them special to anyone who has played them. There is a charm to every Mario World game, that to date has not been able to be captured in any movie. The release of *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* is the most recent attempt to capture the charm of the game in a movie. How did it do?

If you would have told five-year-old me that this movie would exist, I would not have believed it. Chris Pratt does well, his funny acting style fits perfectly with this kind of movie. Anya Taylor-Joy will definitely be one of my new favorite female actors. She gave a lead and amazing personality

to Princess Peach. Charlie Day's portrayal of Luigi is amazing. He definitely fit the voice of Luigi!

I would personally recommend watching this movie if you were really a Mario games fan when you were younger or you were looking for a comedy to watch with your family. The storyline was great in this movie.

Without giving you any spoilers, there are many references to the various Mario games. It was a little emotional in the theater at the scenes with the bros as babies. It was heartwarming to show how much they truly care for each other, especially when it builds to the end when they reunite. I was expecting fun, but I was not expecting emotional connection to the characters and the story. It

was so much so, that it made me think about the relationship I have with my own sister. I also love the development of them both. Luigi being brave to help his brother and Mario, tackle problems in our day-to-day lives.

It was admirable that they had to courage to face the odds to rescue Peach. It was also nice to see Peach's backstory. However, it makes me wonder if she was an orphan or if she got lost from her parents. It remains a mystery to us all. Toad is an icon, there to protect Peach and he does a great job too. That is how loyal toads are.

Donkey Kong and his relationship with Mario was an interesting thing to do. Especially in the fighting scene. They were talking



about their dads and they both had something they relate with. Being able to work it through and work together is an amazing development.

The main theme of this movie is family and the hard work needed to keep a good relationships, especially when cranky Kong sees DK as not just a spotlight hog but

a loyal son. Overall, I give this movie a 9.5/10! Definitely hoping for maybe a sequel or other spin-offs!

While other critics did not love this movie, there is a lot there for average people, who love the games and have a family. It is a great place to go for family fun and great entertainment.

Top Ten Plus One: Most Anticipated Movies of Summer 2023

By Michael Castro

It has been a full three years since we went into lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic. Finally, this summer movie season seems to be the first in a long while to be considered "normal," whatever that means.

There are a lot of movies that were started and delayed during the Covid nightmare. This summer promises a wide range of superhero movies from DC and Marvel, as well as Disney and Pixar. Action movies and monsters fill out the allotment of summer entertainment. Here are the top picks for this summer, in order of release date.

Guardians of the Galaxy Volume 3: It already came out on May 5, since the summer movie season seems to begin that early now. Directed by James Gunn, who did the first two installments of this franchise, this movie brings the entire gang of guardians back including Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana,



Dave Bautista, Pom Klementieff, Karen Gillan, Sean Gunn, Bradley Cooper, Vin Diesel, Chukwudi Iwuji, Will Poulter, Elizabeth Debicki, and Daniela Melchior

in their roles. Star-Lord and his companions return for the third, (and last?) chapter of *Guardians of the Galaxy*. It follows the gang as they embark on another adventure, this time tied to Rocket's tragic past. No spoilers here, but bring a tissue, it is so sad.

Fast X: Again, a movie that came out already on May 19, directed by Louis Leterrier, with Vin Diesel and other members of the *Fast and Furious* franchise family including Jason Momoa, Charlize Theron, Brie Larson, and Rita Moreno. No summer would be complete without another addition to the *Fast and Furious* series. This is number 10 (hence X) and notably Dwayne Johnson is missing from this edition, though everyone else seems to be here. This installment seems to add more excitement as well as bring back all the crazy stunts that defy gravity. Bring lots of popcorn.



The Little Mermaid: Getting more recent still is an offering that is more in line for bringing your little sister to the movies. Released on May 26, and directed by Rob Marshall, *The Little Mermaid* remake stars Halle Bailey, Jonah Hauer-King, Melissa McCarthy, Javier Bardem, Daveed Diggs, Jacob Tremblay and Awkwafina. Though there was some controversy surrounding the decision to cast Ariel with a black actress, that does not seem to have hurt the ticket sales of this classic Disney story. This is the next addition to the recent practice of Disney to make live action movies of their classic animated films. In the same spirit as *The Lion King* and *Mulan*, *The Little Mermaid* attempts to bring that story to a new generation of kids.

Spider-Man: Across the Spidaverse:

The animated version of Spider-man is back. Miles Morales returns in the first chapter of what was originally billed as a two-part sequel to the Oscar-winning *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*. This time around, Miles reunites with Gwen, and the other multiverse characters to fight a new villain that will threaten all of them. Released on June 2, it was directed by Joaquim Dos Santos, Kemp Powers, and Justin K. Thompson. It features the voice talents of Shameik Moore, Hailee Steinfeld, Oscar Isaac, Jake Johnson, Issa Rae.

Transformers: Rise of the Beasts: It has been a while since we saw a Transformers movie, but this one promises to be one of the best. On June 9, *Transformers* goes back to the past in another throwback nostalgia work. It takes place in the 1990s and sees another human ally



(played by In the Heights' Anthony Ramos) teaming up with the Autobots known as Maximals in their war against the Predacons and Terrorcons, you know robot beasts. It was directed by Steven Caple Jr and stars the already mentioned, Anthony Ramos, along with Dominique Fishback, Ron Perlman, Michelle Yeoh, Pete Davidson, Peter Cullen, and Colman Domingo.

Elemental: Another animated flick is this entry from Pixar. It will be released on June 16 so that all the dads can take their kids to the movies. Directed by Peter Sohn, who directed *The Good Dinosaur* and takes place in a world where citizens who represent the four elements coexist. Here, a young woman made of fire forms an unlikely



friendship with a man made of water, leading them to rethink the way they see the world. Let's see if fire and water mix. This stars the voice talents of Leah Lewis, Mamoudou Athie, Mason Wertheimer, Wendi McLendon-Covey, and Catherine O'Hara.

The Flash: One of the most anticipated movies this summer is the DC production of *The Flash*. Also being released on June 16, so dads with older kids can bring them to the movies too, and directed by Andy Muschietti, this movie is FINALLY coming out after a number of delays. *The Flash*, which follows Ezra Miller's Barry Allen as he uses his powers to change the past, only to realize his actions have had disastrous effects in the future and he must figure out a way to save the world. Come on Batmans! It stars Ezra Miller, Michael Keaton, Sasha Calle, Michael Shannon, Ron Livingston, Maribel Verdú, and Kiersey Clemons.

Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny: Speaking of blasts from the past, the first
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Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom is totally worth the wait

By Michael Castro

The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom has taken the gaming world by storm, capturing the hearts of fans and newcomers alike. While there are a couple of notable complaints surrounding the game, a deeper look reveals that they can be attributed to factors beyond the control of the talented development team. As Link, players embark on a quest to rescue Princess Zelda (again) and restore peace to the kingdom with new powers, new ways to travel, and a more immersive and much larger world than previous games of the series.

The gameplay in *Tears of the Kingdom* remains true to the beloved *Legend of Zelda* franchise, blending exploration, puzzle-solving, and thrilling combat. Players traverse vast and visually

stunning landscapes, uncovering secrets, battling enemies, and completing quests. Link's new arsenal of powers such as recall which makes an object traverse backward to its original spot, ultra hand which allows the players to pick up objects and fuse them together with other things to make personal creations, fuse which allows the players to fuse weapons and items together, and ascend which lets the players go through floors and roofs as long as they are above Link's head.

In a testament to its popularity, *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom* shattered records by selling an astounding 10 million copies within the first three days of its release. This achievement is a testament to the game's widespread appeal and the enduring legacy of *The Legend of Zelda* franchise. There is also a special

edition *Zelda* Switch console to completely immerse yourself in the *Zelda* action, though that system will not save you from buying the game for seventy dollars. It does not come with it.

Some players have voiced concerns regarding two aspects of the game: repetitive character interactions and the lack of graphical improvements. However, it is important to recognize that these issues can be attributed to external factors rather than the developers' capabilities. The following is based on personal research of many hours of, well, research, not play on the game.

Firstly, the repetitive character interactions can be seen as a deliberate narrative choice to maintain consistency in the game's world. While it may seem repetitive on the surface, these interactions often unveil subtle nuances and



PHOTO COURTESY OF NINTENDO

The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom is a worthy entry to the *Zelda* franchise.

deeper insights into the story, enhancing the overall experience.

Secondly, the perceived lack of graphical improvement is not solely the fault of the developers. Nintendo's decision not to upgrade the hardware capabilities of the Nintendo Switch limits the graphical advancements that developers can achieve. Despite this limitation, *Tears of the Kingdom* still manages to deliver visually stunning environments and beautifully designed characters

that stay true to the series' distinct art style.

The overall impression of the game is that it is a worthy entry to the *Zelda* franchise. It is a fun game for *Zelda* fans of many years and for those that never played *Zelda* before. It is worth the investment and the increased price for a Switch game. You will certainly get many hours of enjoyment worthing through *Hirule* and facing all the challenges.

Systematic Racism in America still exists today

By Kevin Nieves

Does systematic racism still exist in America today? There has been a lot of discussion lately in the last few years about whether this is still a common aspect of American life, but is it still a thing or not?

Racism can be found in education, when school districts with mostly black, native and latino students get less revenue than districts with fewer student of color. Systematic racism on employment is still prevalent as well, especially in the hiring process of many companies. Racism can show up in a lot of other ways too. For example, in health care, a belief that black patients feel

less pain.

Of course, the criminal justice system has also been plagued by racism. In 2020, a study using a dataset with 100 million traffic stops across the United States found that black drivers are 20% more likely to get stopped than white drivers relative to their residential population. Once pulled over, black drivers are then one to two times more likely to be searched than white drivers.

These statistics represent a system that is racist, and therefore systematic racism. Systematic racism affects educational quality. For school districts with over five thousand students, funding is about \$13.5 million less than other districts. This means fewer

computers, fewer teachers and outdated textbooks. In schools with resources like gifted and talented programs, systematic racism is a problem. Lower quality of education and fewer resources affect where a student attends college, how many loans they need and if they graduate.

In education, the problem of race means that young people cannot even get a leg up and improve their future, because they cannot get the education they need to make it in modern society. It is not even their fault.

In employment systematic racism is well documented. It begins with the hiring process. Black Americans with white-sounding names receive about 50% more

callbacks for their job applications. Even having a college degree does not help employment chances. Between 2010-2012 one study showed that while only 6% of engineering graduates were unemployed, 10% of black engineer graduates were unemployed. It is not fair for those who worked hard to get a degree and then cannot find a job or be able to start their career.

Systematic racism is healthcare is also still prevalent in American society. It can show up in odd ways, such as a belief that black patients feel less pain and therefore suffer unnecessarily. Studies show that black patients are significantly less likely to receive pain medication.

In the criminal justice system, the effects of systematic racism are extensively documented. Getting pulled over at a higher rate than white drivers and then getting searched at a higher rate as well means that race is a factor in policing. Then once in the criminal justice system, the race affects the outcome of the court system as well.

So, it is safe to say that systematic racism is still a huge problem in America. There are still many ways that racism has an impact on American society. It is not just one race that gets affected by this either. There are different races that also get pulled into racist practices. Therefore, this is a problem and it does exist.

Effects of Education Inequality

By Ryan Hernandez

Inequality in education is something that exists and haunts many school districts, even ours. Personal observations between the PHS and the academies has reinforced my belief about this topic. The purpose of this article is to bring more attention to it and hopefully prevent others from being affected by it in the future. It has been something that's overlooked and not mentioned as much as it should be.

It is harder for those to obtain the same education, privilege and opportunities as others due to the wealth and racism issues. This goes a long way and as explained in the article, "To reduce income inequality in the United States, we must rethink how public schools are funded" (Maximillian Schenke, The Michigan Daily).

"We must fund public schools to lower wealth inequality," it states "Predominantly white districts, which are often smaller and wealthier than districts with mainly communities of color, receive \$23 billion more in funding nationwide."

This causes a harder and unattainable goal for those in poverty, bigger schools and less funded places to achieve. Those who stay in schools who are funded more are more likely to get more opportunities, better jobs and lives than those who are not. It is for this reason that communities filled

with people of color are funded less than predominantly white districts.

The pandemic as made these problems more evident and also created more problems that seem to be never ending. Issues arising from the pandemic has shown how many students were affected personally and academically.

In the article "The pandemic is widening educational inequality," it states "In Britain in 2018, for example, children from disadvantaged backgrounds were twice as likely to leave school without basic qualifications in English and math as their wealthier peers."

As someone who has seen this personally happen, it's very true and alive till this day. I've had smaller cousins who did not have the right setting, education or resources and were forced to repeat a grade and some even several times because of how difficult it was for them. It is a lot harder for those who were smaller and younger to be taught in their own homes with noise and other distractions around them. This causes them to be held back, struggle and leave them disadvantaged.

For many the dream of going to college is a dream that will never come true. In the article "Is the cost of college worth it? Maybe not for the poor" it states, "The government must recognize that the higher education system now is not a cure-all for inequality and commit to provid-

ing better policies to help those in poverty in addition to offering more solutions to making college affordable."

This shows and explains how college can also play into education inequality. Knowing that no matter how many loans, all the college education, and other work, that I am not guaranteed a good life in the long term, makes me question whether I should go or not. Knowing that those with degrees can make the same or even worse than those who have one.

As we all know and pretty much experience it, funding for schools are a problem. In the article "Educational inequality is a critical problem that must be solved," it states, "This funding should be used to hire qualified teachers, purchase updated resources and technology, and provide additional support for students."

This is something I believe in, because everyone deserves the same opportunity as everyone else. It is just infuriating how long this process takes.

Education inequality is something that needs to be worked on and further looked into more in our communities, states and country. It is an issue that has been long overdue to get the proper attention it deserves. Everyone deserves the right and better chances of succeeding in this life whatever it means to take it and get it.

Racism does not need to affect you

By Matthew Brocato

Racism is an outdated idea that has been around for as long as there have been people. However, in the United States today, it is not a part of the systems that make the country function.

Look at the recent interview of presidential candidate Tim Scott, currently a senator from South Carolina. He was grilled by "The View" hosts for not admitting that there is systematic racism in America. A polite man, he answered their attacks and stated how he was himself an example of the promise of American equality and that if he could do it, anyone could. He did not deny that there have been problems in the past, but that it is a modern America where anyone can succeed if they put in the work and dedication.

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has pretty much the same sentiment. He is a black man, that came from very humble beginnings, to become a supreme court justice of the United States. He is also against affirmative action because he believes that it creates more of the sentiment that it is supposed to account for.

People wonder in the real world whether someone got their job because of their skill and talent and hard work or because

they are the right color. Need I mention our current vice president to highlight this concept?

If we look around this school, students should not be looking for a reason that the game is rigged and the excuse that even if they try that they will fail. There are no guarantees in life, but as an American in the twenty-first century, race is not the thing that will keep you back.

Look around this school. Are student working as hard as they can to achieve their dreams? Are there many things that students can do and programs that they can take advantage of, like tutoring in the morning and in the afternoon, extra help from teachers who care, and all the advanced placement and dual enrollment classes, not to mention the pathways that will give ANY student to the skills to succeed. All they have to do is sign up, show up and try.

I see many students who do not care about their own future as much as the teachers and guidance counselors around them about their own future. We as students of any color need to step up and take advantage of the opportunities that are all around us. So, before you blame others for your lack of success, look to yourself. There is always something you can do to make your own life better.

Science Class Goes Fishing

Continued from Page 1

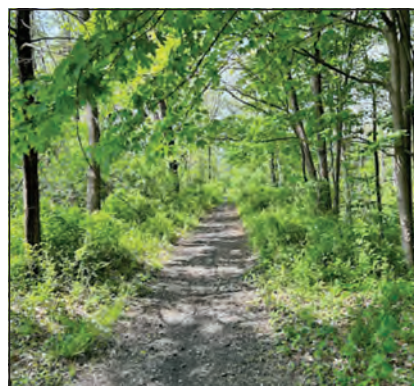
the forest, we arrived at a big pond that was stocked full of fish. We were assured that the fish were ready to be caught. Students were allowed to go fishing, and if they wanted take the fish with them, or they could just release them back to the pond. Some chose to take it and eat it at home, though no one mentioned who was going to clean the fish.

But as for myself, I was one of the lucky people who caught a fish! It wasn't that big, but it was definitely something. While it was exciting to catch a fish, I let it go. A fun fish fact that I did not know was that if you want to release a fish (instead of eating it) you can actually just cut the string, and the hook will stay on the fish's stomach, where it will dissolve in the fish's stomach acid. It should be gone in two or three weeks. I had always wondered about hooks and if it hurt the fish, but they have some pretty intense stomach acid.

After the fishing we still had some time, so we explored the preserve further. Another interesting plant was something that naturally grows in New Jersey, though it is getting rare. It is called may apple, but it is not actually an apple tree. This plant can be used to make an edible Jelly, but the plant only blooms in May. I guess that is why they call it may apple.



May apple plants bloom in spring and can be made into jelly.



The nature path to get to the pond was fun and interesting.



PHS cadets visit the USS WASP at Pier 88 in New York City during Fleet Week 2023.

Fleet Week

Continued from Page 1

with an advantage at sea," said Rear Adm. Christopher S. Gray about the event.

Fleet Week is a chance to see the navies of NATO allies as well. This year, Great Britain, Italy and Canada participated. Cadets visited the U.S.S. Wasp, a multipurpose amphibious assault carrier. Not as large as a supercarrier, this small

carrier can take the battle to the enemy with F-35's and Ospreys.

PHS has attended other Fleet Weeks because it is a chance to explore the ships, meet the sailors and learn about life and career opportunities in the United States Navy and the Marine Corps. However, the trip also instills discipline and citizenship to the PHS ROTC unit. This will ensure that the PHS cadets will continue to make us proud.

Governor De Santis passes new immigration law that has many people in Florida anxious

By Angel Ramirez

Governor De Santis is currently the governor of Florida. He has recently announced that he is running to be president of the United States in 2024. De Santis has criticized Biden's immigration policies and the amount of illegal immigrants crossing the southern border. De Santis is looking for a way to put a stop to this immediately, at least for what he can do in Florida. He is set to sign a bill that will require employers with 25 or more employees to check immigration status of all their employees.

Those companies that do not comply will be fined \$1,000 per day until they can prove that they have hired legal citizens. The new approved bill was countered by Democrats but it was still

approved after much discussion. There are many reasons that this bill has popular support in Florida, for example when an illegal immigrant killed a 21-year-old in a car accident.

With the bill created by the Florida Legislature and signed into law by Governor De Santis now employers must use a federal E-verify system to check employee legal status. This law will include charges of human trafficking for those illegally transporting immigrants across state lines. A more controversial part of this law is that it prohibits illegal immigrants from driving, even if they have a license from another state.

The legislation provides \$12 million for Governor De Santis to get illegal immigrants out of Florida. De Santis also wants to

revoke a law that allows undocumented children to qualify for college tuition. Even hospitals will ask their patients for legal status. De Santis is said to be anti-immigrant which can mean he is just discriminating against these people. But others say that he believes that there has been many dangerous effects caused by illegal immigrants.

This law will make many changes in Florida. Even though many might say that this law will not affect us up here in New Jersey, it is representative of the ideas that many believe regarding the immigration issue in America. This law may be successful in Florida and then other states will adopt similar laws. That will make big changes for immigrants across the country, not to mention Passaic.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis recently signed an immigration law that will make it mandatory for companies to check the legal status of all employees.

The Positive Impact of Immigration on the U.S.

By Laura Robladillo Caballero

Immigration has been a hot topic in the United States for a long time. It is sparking debates about the impact of immigration on the nation. While some argue that immigration has negative consequences, it is important to recognize the numerous positive effects it has on the country. Some of these positive effects are economic growth, workforce skill and cultural enrichment.

1. Economic Growth:

Economic growth refers to the increase in the production and consumption of goods and services within an economy over a specific period of time. According to a report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, immigrants contribute significantly to the U.S. economy. They start businesses, create jobs, and stimulate innovation. Research conducted by the Fiscal Policy Institute found that immigrant-owned small businesses employed over 4.7 million people in 2017. These businesses generate revenue, pay taxes, and enhance local economies.

2. Workforce and Skills:

Workforce refers to the total number of people engaged in employment within a specific sector, industry, or country. The Center for American Progress states that immigrants fill critical gaps in the U.S. labor market, particularly in sectors with labor shortages, such as agriculture, healthcare, and technology. Immigrants bring diverse skills, talents, and knowledge that complement the existing workforce. The Partnership for a New American Economy reports that immigrant workers increase the productivity and competitiveness of American industries. Immigrants come to America for a better life. They achieve that by being a part of the economy, helping the nation by helping themselves.

3. Cultural Enrichment:

Cultural enrichment refers to the process of enhancing and expanding one's understanding and appreciation of different cultures, traditions, arts, languages, and customs. Immigration has always been a fundamental aspect of America's cultural identity. The Pew Research Center estimates that by 2055, the U.S. population will not have a single racial or ethnic majority. This diversity strengthens social cohesion,

encourages tolerance, and fosters cultural exchange. The National Bureau of Economic Research highlights that cultural diversity stimulates creativity and innovation, leading to economic advancements. The strength of America comes from all the different cultures that make up the country.

4. Entrepreneurship and Innovation:

Entrepreneurship refers to the activity of identifying, creating, and pursuing opportunities to establish and manage a new business or venture. Entrepreneurship refers to the process of identifying, creating, and pursuing opportunities to establish and manage a new business or venture. Immigrants have long been at the forefront of American entrepreneurship. According to the Kauffman Foundation, immigrants are almost twice as likely to start a new business compared to native-born Americans. These businesses create jobs and drive economic growth. The National Foundation for American Policy found that immigrants founded more than half of U.S. startups valued at \$1 billion or more, including companies like Google, Tesla, and Intel. America should take advantage of the opportunities provided by immigrants and the companies

they will start.

5. Fiscal Contributions:

Contrary to popular belief, immigrants make positive fiscal contributions to the United States. According to the Cato Institute, immigrants, both documented and undocumented, pay billions of dollars in taxes each year. A study by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine concluded that the long-term fiscal impact of immigrants is positive, contributing to economic growth and public finances. So immigrants contribute to the country even if they are undocumented.

Conclusion:

Overall, immigration has a positive impact on the United States. From bolstering economic growth and filling workforce gaps to enriching culture and driving innovation, immigrants play a crucial role in shaping the nation. It is essential to recognize and appreciate the benefits that immigration brings to the United States while working towards comprehensive immigration reform that addresses concerns and ensures a fair and efficient immigration system.

THE HILLTOP STAR

The Student Newspaper of Passaic High School

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- | | |
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The staff of the *Hilltop Star* would like to recognize and report on all the great happenings at PHS. Please make use of the scoop box in the main office or contact any staff member or Mr. Zeiler directly. Let's get the word out!

If anyone would like to join the staff of the *Hilltop Star*, please see Mr. Zeiler (S310). We are always looking for writers, photographers and even editors for the student newspaper. We need your talent!

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Passaic Pulitzer

Continued from Page 2

their own linked personal blogs about the teams and the athletes of Passaic and their dedication to their sport. In-depth coverage of the boys and girls soccer teams, the volleyball teams, basketball, football, cheerleading, and homecoming, were all excellent examples of the best that this school has to offer and the best journalism as well. Congratulations to all the members of the Sports Department of the *Hilltop Star* and to the athletes that made up the stories this year.

This is also the first year that student reporters began their own blog sites. Many of these deserve recognition for their creativity and presentation. However, there are too many to list in this space. There is also not enough space here to thank all of the students who worked so hard to make this the best year ever for the *Hilltop Star*. I am excited to continue to bring excellence in journalism through the publication of the *Hilltop Star* next year, so please sign up to take journalism, or just stop by M117 to see Mr. Zeiler to be a part of the best journalism team in the state!

Top Ten + One

Continued from Page 3

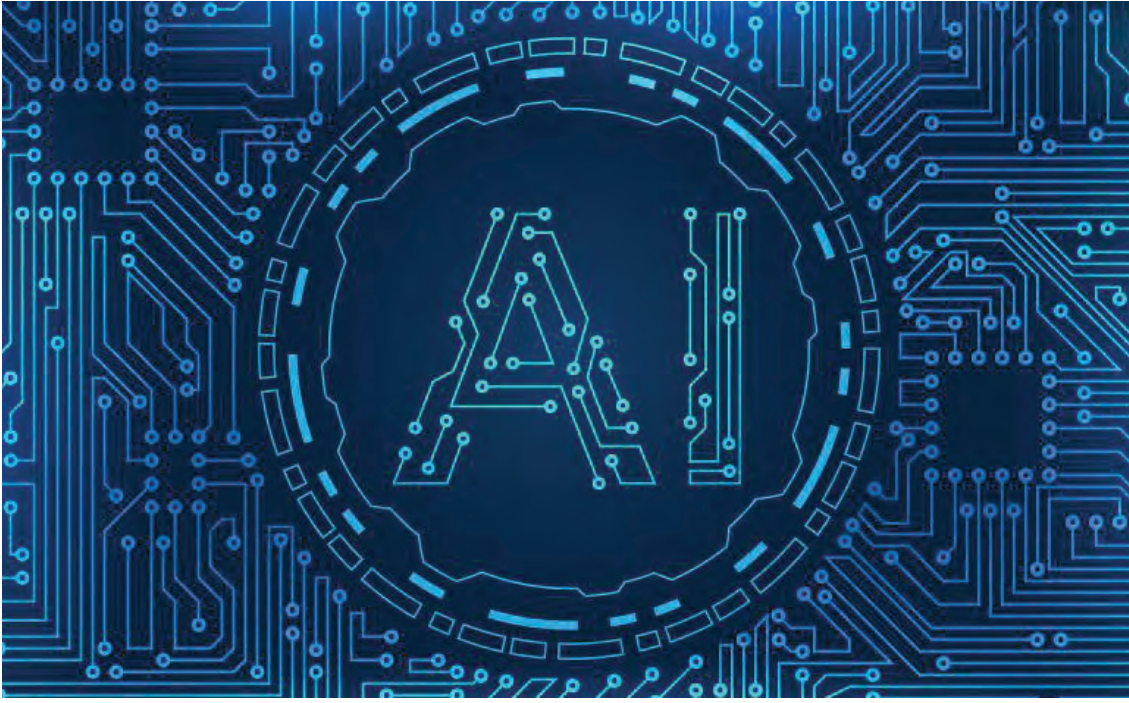
Indiana Jones movie came out in the mid-eighties, long before we were born. Harrison Ford returns to play Indy again, this time in the late 1960s and fighting (who else?) former Nazis from carrying out their plan related to the ongoing Space Race. It promises to be action nostalgia at its best, especially since director James Mangold is at the helm. He is known for his masterpiece works *Logan* and *Ford v Ferrari*. It stars Harrison Ford, of course, along with Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Mads Mikkelsen, Antonio Banderas, John Rhys-Davies, Toby Jones, and Boyd Holbrook. Even though I was not alive for the first *Indiana Jones*, I will be first in line for this installment.

Mission Impossible: Dead Reckoning - Part 1: Tom Cruise is another staple of summer blockbuster movies. Out on July 12, this is the first of a two-parter, and it is the latest installment of the *Mission: Impossible* franchise, which will almost certainly feature Tom Cruise riding a motorcycle off a cliff. The IMF team is led by Ethan Hunt (Tom Cruise) and also stars Ving Rhames, Simon Pegg,

Rebecca Ferguson, Hayley Atwell, Vanessa Kirby, Esai Morales, Pom Klementieff, Henry Czerny, and Shea Whigham. It is directed by Christopher McQuarrie.

Meg 2: The Trench: The sole monster movie this summer, arriving on August 4, this is the sequel to the surprise 2018 hit creature feature *The Meg*. Ben Wheatley is director and once again pits action hero Jason Statham against an impossibly big shark. What would be better for a summer action movie than Jason Statham and a big, huge, monstrous shark? In addition to Jason Statham is Sienna Guillory and Cliff Curtis.

Blue Beetle: Another DC Universe origin story is this comic favorite, coming out on August 18. Directed by Angel Manuel Soto and starring Xolo Maridueña, Susan Sarandon, George Lopez, Harvey Guillen, Adriana Barraza, Damián Alcázar, and Raoul Max Trujillo. Straight off his success in *Cobra Kai*, Xolo Maridueña stars as the titular hero in this DC origin story about a recent college grad who comes into possession of an ancient alien relic that gives him powers beyond his wildest dreams. This is a whole new story and hopefully expands the great heroes from DC.



Like it or not, AI is here

By Jimmy Ramos

Whether you like it or not, artificial intelligence (AI) will be the biggest thing to affect the world in our lifetimes. Even though now it is the subject of a bunch of jokes and it seems like something that is a fad, it will slowly take over. But not all is bad. AI has revolutionized the way we look and interact with technology. As AI continues to grow and evolve, we question its impact on society. We'll be examining AI and its profound implications.

There are good and bad aspects about AI, and there is a lot of misconceptions about what this might mean for the world. Will it be like the Terminator and humans will be forced to fight the machines in a post-apocalyptic future? Will it be more like Star Trek, where humans are freed to pursue the things that are really meaningful and not be concerned about things like working everyday and making a living? Well, there will be some good and bad but humanity will accept it and embrace it as every other technology in the past.

Let us first see what some of the positive parts of AI will be. So the good things first. First and foremost, we humans have already benefited from AI. In the field of medicine people will benefit from the use of a digital brain to help them have a better life. Someone who was paralyzed can use robotic arms and legs that are controlled by AI. AI

is even contributing to the development of a brain-controlled robotic arm that can help a paralyzed person feel again through complex direct human-brain interfaces. People will be able to move and get around, where before they would be handicapped. Another example would be "In recent years, artificial intelligence has become increasingly powerful, propelling discovery across scientific fields and enabling researchers to delve into problems previously too complex to solve." which is something positive about AI. Doctors believe that AI will help them solve medical issues like curing cancer. We were not able to discover or solve certain things until the help of AI came and we finally got to it.

Though, this next part will have people either scared or happy. AI will definitely be smarter than all living humans and that could mean disaster or greatness. Will this technology help us or rule us? Some ways we can benefit from this are being able to get answers quickly, be smarter and make little to no mistakes whether grammatically or mathematically, and they're just better at thinking than humans. The question is whether this will make humans smarter or dumber. Some ways we could not benefit from this and it being disastrous are it being smarter than us and taking a mind of its own, being too much for us or even being able to replicate us by our speech patterns, the way

we speak and make it sound so realistic. The question most people will ask is "will AI be better than us?"

We know that AI is great and all, but it also has many negative aspects too. As we know it, AI is rising and that means a lot of places will want to get their hands on AI machines that will help them with doing the job faster and more efficiently. What does this mean for us? This would mean that many of us would be left without any job and could ruin it for all of us who need jobs to survive. The biggest problem with AI is that it can take the jobs of many workers. This is already happening with jobs like translators, proofreader, taxi/truck drivers, and being a receptionist in a way that they're using electric cars to drive others around, using little robot to take orders and give the food.

The rapid advance of AI is transforming everyone's life. As we examine the rise of AI, we see it has changed the way of our lives either positively, others negatively. We explored the potential risks we have with AI and the good outcomes with it as well. Not all will agree with AI being good or bad, but we can't deny that it is a major step for our society and it'll be vital for our future, but it also has its own flaws. Though AI is used in a lot of people's lives, we will definitely see new ways to perceive, use and adapt to it in the future.



Artificial Intelligence will bring big change

By Michael Bermejo

Artificial intelligence, also known as machine intelligence, is defined by Wikipedia as any system or computer that imitates cognitive processes that people typically connect with the human mind, such as learning and problem-solving. Artificial intelligence is present in many aspects of our daily life, such as Siri, Google, drones, advertising, and much more. Artificial intelligence is being incorporated into every industry's foundation in one way or another, transforming how we think and live. Artificial intelligence's potential is both exciting and a also a source of worry. One thing is certain, it will make big changes in the world.

In "The Future of Work," Forrester predicts that by 2030, job losses will reach a rate of 29.9%, with a lower percentage of jobs created at 13.3%. AI will replace jobs like data entry, inventory tracking, proofreading, and front desk receptionists, and as self-driving vehicles, drones, and factory automation become more common, professions are becoming obsolete. AI will replace jobs like data entry, inventory tracking, proofreading, and front desk receptionists, and with self-driving vehicles, drones, and factory automation becoming more common, professions are becoming obsolete.

Artificial intelligence has been used to make significant discoveries as well. Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory was able to predict the development of new thermoelectric materials, and Astronomers from the University of Texas made the discovery of two new planets with the aid of AI in 2019. NASA claimed the finding of an eight-planet

solar system with the help of AI back in 2017. With fresh discoveries that result in scientific breakthroughs made through AI, the pace of development and technology will increase as well. AI will make it easier for scientists to work in emergency situations.

AI is being used to identify patterns in illnesses, diagnoses, and therapies. It can be used to lengthen life expectancy, forecast the beginning of illnesses, streamline the drug discovery process, and support medical professionals in diagnosing patients. Drones are revolutionizing the delivery of medical services, and countries with underdeveloped healthcare systems can benefit from this technology. AI can recognize undesirable cells using nanotechnology, notably in cancer patients, and it can also penetrate tumors and drug delivery. AI promises to make us all healthier and make our lives longer.

Positive and negative changes due to AI will change the world in the coming decade. Anyone with access to AI's power must exercise caution when using it. To keep everyone secure, privacy regulations and security measures need to be revised. Beyond that, the pros already outweigh the downsides; as a result, if research is done in the future with accountability and openness, the scales won't shift against the positive.

One word of advice for those of us who will be entering the workforce. A smart human will need to find careers that are likely not going to be replaced by AI technology. Also, having skills in multiple fields will help you make a living even if technology changes things in some positions.

The NBA Makes Some Rule Changes

By Jeremy Guzman

With baseball making changes to help their games, in an attempt to make them more viewer friendly, the National Basketball Association has also made some changes as well. The NBA has made eight rule changes, which does not seem like much, but they are in fifty articles. Many of these cover equipment and facilities.

Other regulations cover teams and their players, captains and coaches, rules for playing, violations such as fouls and their penalties, some special situation and even officials.

One of the most significant rule changes is called the

golden rule. All athletes are liable to this, and it suggests that athlete will take full responsibility for their actions.

Also each team is limited to four fouls per regulation period, and they should not have any additional penalties. This must be in place to help keep the games more fair and less brutal. Common fouls are going to be charged as team fouls. If they exceed four the team will be penalized by one free throw attempt plus a penalty free throw. This is going to help reduce the number of fouls per game because players will be less likely to initiate a foul if it means that their team will suffer the consequences.

Another rule change states

that players can only wear one or two digits on their NBA jerseys. Players are not allowed to wear numbers higher than ninety-nine, at least during NBA games.

These rules may not seem like a big deal, and they have been attempted in the past to get these rule changes done, but there has been a lot of push back from fans.

The standard NBA contract today specifically prohibits boxing, professional wrestling, motorcycling, moped-riding, auto-racing, sky-diving and hang gliding. Players are not allowed to do these dangerous activities because a loss of a player due

Continued on Page 8

Congratulations to the class of 2023!

Graduation is Thursday, June 22 at 5:00 p.m. at the Boverini Stadium.

The Fight Between Metlife and Giants Stadium

By John Santiago

The Jets and the Giants have been switching stadiums for quite a while now. The Jets have been travelling between stadiums for a long time and have yet to find a stadium to call their own. But the Giants have had their old stadium. It was called the Giants Stadium and that was the home of the Giants until it changed. However, the Jets have been moving between several stadiums, and have been going back and forth between them.

As Giants Stadium approached 30 years old, it was becoming one of the older stadiums in the NFL. The stadium was so old that when they hosted the Super Bowl it became obvious that they needed a fix. People began to question the safety of fans going to such an old venue. That's when the Metlife Stadium started getting built and was able to hold 85,000, which is a lot of people.

The Jets' home field has been located at four different stadiums during the franchise's 62-year history – isolated games and short-term temporary home fields are not necessarily included. The first stadium it played in was Polo Grounds IV and that was in 1960-1963. The second stadium they played in was Shea, from 1964 to 1983. The third stadium the Jets played in was Giants Stadium from 1984 to 2009. Now the stadium that they play in, to this day, is the Metlife Stadium, and it could not have come too soon.

Now all the teams and their fans are happy. The Jets and the Giants now play in the same stadium again, a home field for the local teams of New York and New Jersey. They just switch endzones every game when they play, to make it fair.

I feel like they are doing good so far and there is no problem. The stadium holds 87,000 plus and it's great. Both sides have their own locker rooms and both sides look happy.

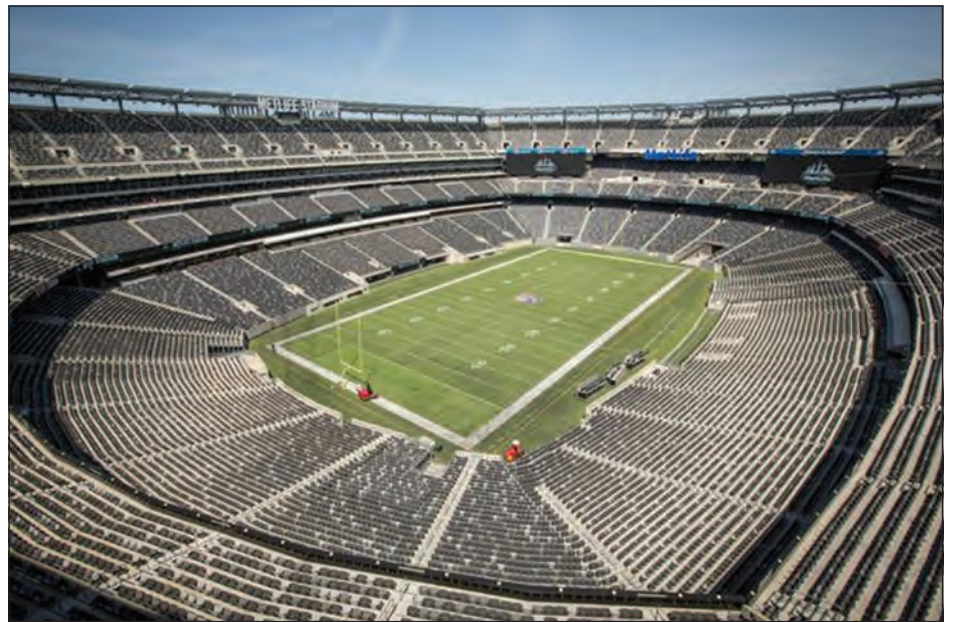


PHOTO COURTESY OF METLIFE STADIUM.COM

The new Metlife Stadium is home to both the Giants and the Jets, and is located in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Image Courtesy of MetlifeStadium.com

Flag Football – New Sport takes PHS by Storm

By Merian Villanueva and Sheila Inoa

A sport never predicted to come to Passaic High school, has been added to the list of wonderful athletic choices for PHS students. Passaic just introduced its first female flag football team on March 17, 2023, contributing to the school's legacy and making history. The girls flag football team started its new team with about 20-26 girls ready for their upcoming season. Girl's sports are often disregarded and often underrated in high schools. Girls must work twice as hard to not just win, but also to prove themselves.

However, that is not the case at PHS. These girls are making a difference, and Passaic High School is right there with them. This is a significant first step that will set the tone for the next generation of PHS girls. Luckily for us, our school has provided the girls with nothing short of overwhelming support.

Starting a new team is hard, but it was necessary; and these girls are definitely taking advantage of



PHOTO COURTESY OF MERIAN VILLANUEVA

Practices took place early in the morning, but were necessary for a great season.

the opportunity they were given, and giving it their all. They have all been extremely committed, and it shows. The flag football team begins their days with an hour and a half of practice at 6 a.m., then heads to school after, or has practice in the afternoon from 4-6. These girls have done fantastically well for a new team; they had no experience before being introduced to a new sport and experience at their school, but that didn't stop them from giving

it their all.

The Passaic girls flag football team had only won three scrimps up until Tuesday, May 9th, 2023. The dedication these girls have put to this sport paid off, as they defeated Kennedy. The crowd at the stan cheered and chanted for these girls during their first real game. These girls performed admirably against Kennedy, which resulted in a 26-0 victory with the support of everyone in attendance. These ladies are truly making



PHOTO COURTESY OF MERIAN VILLANUEVA

The new team is proud to represent PHS!

their mark and demonstrating that they are not here to play! "The team is performing admirably for a first year team. Overall the team is a great team; there is a lot of leadership and sportsmanship within the girls; everyone communicates and takes practice very seriously," said Kirveling, senior teammate.

This is only the beginning for this team, with such excellent coaches and players the flag football team will develop and become

amazing. I am really excited for the approaching highschoolers and the other ladies who didn't get to join; you guys are given such an incredible chance with a beautiful team and instructors, but all it takes is your dedication and commitment to the sport. So this is a big Thankyou to Passaic High School for providing these girls with this new athletic opportunity. Wishing nothing but the best for the next year's girls flag football team. GO PASSAIC!!!

Girls Flag Football makes history by kicking Kennedy to the curb!!

By Desiree Santana

Even though many already know that we have a Girls Flag Football team, they might not know how successful it was this season. Since the girls new flag football was introduced to Passaic athletics they have been making history ever since. There is literally now the talk of the school after they received a victory against Paterson Kennedy High School with the final score of 26-0. What a great night for PHS sports shutting out a rival team.

What made that night even better was that it was PHS senior night. There were many supporters at the game. It was a chance for everyone to see how great PHS athletics is. The girls really represented the best of PHS athletics all season long. There is recognition throughout the flag football teams, and PHS is making a statement.

Supposedly there were recruiters looking at some of the teammates from this year's PHS flag football team. After an interview with the captains from the team, Nicauly Perez and Desiree San-



IMAGE COURTESY OF DESIREE SANTANA

Above: Girls flag football representing the best of PHS by winning on the field. Right: Erianna Espino Ventura was named a Phil Simms High School All Star.

tana, they stated that they are extremely proud of how far the team has come because they had a rough start due to their lack of knowledge about the sport at the time but they have improved a lot and all of their morning practices that take place at 6:15 a.m. paid off. You don't see many people willing to wake up so early almost

everyday of the week knowing that they have school after to get better at the sport knowing that the sport isn't officially considered a Varsity sport yet.

After the season had finished it was announced that a player from the Passaic High School girls flag football team, Erianna Espino Ventura, was part of the

All Star selection. CONGRATULATIONS!!!! WE ARE SO PROUD OF YOU!! Erianna is a multi-sport athlete since she also does swimming and she is a senior. After an interview with her she stated "It is also hard to believe that I had received this award since this is only my first year playing and learning about

the sport and even after many injuries that occurred throughout the season I never gave it and it was all worth it. I would love to thank my coaches for giving me the opportunity of being a part of such an incredible team and my teammates for pushing me, and making sure I am the best version of myself on and off the field."



PHS Athletes Make First Team All-County

By Matthew Garcia

Students have been nominated to First Team All-County for being a great athlete in their chosen sport and also a good student in school. These student athletes put in all of the work and also want to succeed in what they are doing. This is also pretty big for them because they get chosen out of all the the teams in New Jersey. They represent the best of PHS as well as themselves.

All the teams that got nominated are very excited for their students because they know how hard they work. The dinner for the nominated students is June 12 for boys and June 13 for the girls. They are invited to go and receive what they got nominated for and will also be accompanied by their coaches and family.

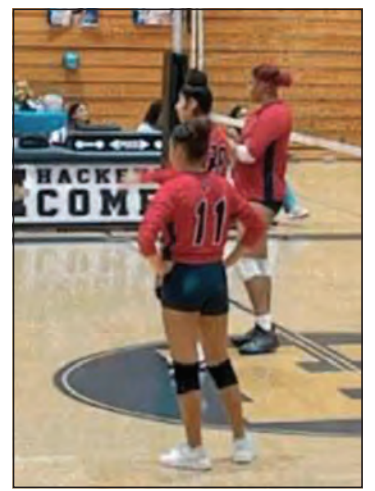
Students that are committed to a plan are Jameil Chalmers, with a D3 offer at Pace University. Also, Nicauly Perez is going to the Army National Guard in September 2023.

PHS Athletes in All County

Sport.....	Student Athlete
Football.....	Jameil Chalmers
Indoor Track.....	Michael Track
Soccer.....	Ronny Lima
Girls Basketball.....	Nicauly Perez & Jessaiah Perez
Girls Volleyball.....	Desiree Santana



Above: Jessaiah Perez, left, and Nicauly Perez, right.



Above: Michael Clark, left, and Desiree Santana, right.
Below: Jameil Chalmers, left, and Ronny Lima, right.



Score Some Friends!

By Cassandra Martinez

High school soccer is a great way to build new friendships and different bonds. It brings together students from different grades and backgrounds who share a common interest in soccer. The shared experience of playing on a team can help create a sense of camaraderie and promote teamwork. Additionally, high school soccer teams often participate in team-building activities, such as practices and games. "Soccer was always my runaway place after school, the place where I felt I could be myself and let my

worries go. I loved the bond I built with my teammates, they all felt like my second family. I really hope the program expands more over time and brings more friendships together." said Katherine Contreras, one of our captains who has been playing high school soccer since freshman year.

It provides opportunities for players to get to know each other and build stronger relationships. High school soccer can also help players develop social skills, such as communication, leadership, and conflict resolution, which can be valuable in building and maintaining relationships. Over-

all, high school soccer can be a great way to make new friends and form bonds with people who share similar interests.

"Personally, high school soccer has given me one of the best friendships in my life. I wouldn't be in the same position I am now if it wasn't for the opportunities soccer has given me. I made friends I can now call family and I think that's the best part of it. It's definitely an era everyone should get the chance to experience, not only for the friends you make but the memories that come with it all" said sophomore Captain Melanie Sancez.

Making memories is a big part of high school soccer. You get to experience the thrill of winning games, the excitement of competing in tournaments, and the camaraderie of being part of a team. That's something you should look forward to for every season you. From whenever you join high school soccer you are likely to make the most unforgettable memories.

"Playing soccer is more than just kicking a ball. Some play for fun while others play to achieve goals. During my freshman year, soccer helped me build bonds with my teammates, making this sport feel like home. Your teammates are like family, they have your back and you have theirs.



PHOTO BY CASSANDRA MARTINEZ

Soccer seniors are ready to take away the great memories they made here at PHS and keep the friendships they made here as well.

This sport also helped many young athletes overcome their problems and escape from reality," said Deisy Huertos. (Deisy is a freshman on the varsity soccer team, no small feat.)

Soccer can help you in many ways. It can improve your physical health by increasing your fitness and endurance. It can also improve your mental health by reducing stress and anxiety. Additionally, soccer can help you develop important life skills such as teamwork, communication, and leadership.

So come join the upcoming season, don't be scared to try something new. Make memories and bonds that can last a lifetime.

This season was a good season as we built bonds. It makes you look forward to the next season. We see the seniors leave and see new classmen come in. Me being a junior and seeing the seniors leave, as I've been playing with them since middle school, makes me feel sad. But I can't wait to see what beautiful things they will do. It also makes me feel that I'm glad I got to be friends with them.

As a captain I can't wait to see new faces and to build our team. There's a summer program, too. Come make new friends and jump into summer. If you are interested and looking for more information, feel free to follow the Girls Soccer instagram @phs.girls_soccer!!!



PHOTO BY CASSANDRA MARTINEZ

NBA Rule Changes

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to an injury or even worse a death, means that the team will suffer.

There is a lot more than just championships and competition on the line. There are millions of dollars too, not to mention all the extra sales of jerseys and things like that. So, billions of dollars are at stake, so each player is forced to sign off on a lifestyle that will keep them a little safer.

Some other changes for game play were added as well, mostly for the safety of the

players. The idea that players need to be safer, like changes made to football in the NFL, means that games will not be stopped, players will not get hurt, and games can be enjoyed much more by the fans. That is a formula that will be more profitable for everyone.

IMAGE COURTESY OF NBA.COM

Rule changes should help all teams have a chance at the playoffs, like this year's first-time championship team, the Denver Nuggets.

