

# The Lake Forest Academy SPECTATOR



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Hear from recent alumni about how life is going--like Issei, Montgomery, Ferdoss, and more!

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## LFA moves up in Niche's national rankings



Courtesy to @lfacademy on Instagram

LFA receives official recognition by Niche 2024.

By **Bela Bock & Erin Cho**

*Managing Editor of Collaborations &  
Assistant Managing Editor of Production*

In September, Lake Forest Academy moved up in rankings made by Niche, a national ranking society that ranks schools based on many aspects, including campus life, academics and much more. LFA was recently ranked the 13th Best Boarding School in the country, the #1 Best Private School in the state of Illinois and 36th Best Private High School in the nation. These rankings will help LFA receive more recognition and will bring in more students.

Head of School, Chris Tennyson said, "When you get to see a really awesome report card for our entire community, that's a proud moment." This rating is a reflection on the hard work that the faculty, staff and students have put into making LFA the best it can be. When asked about what he feels earned LFA its higher ranking this year, Tennyson said, "Some effects are test scores, some is college placement, and a good amount of it is reviews by parents, alums and students. The other part of it is then being able to look at our profile in terms of how we make up our entire community." Meaning, that the ranking is based on much more than just academics, but also on diversity, financial-aid offerings, scholarships and community. LFA brings

in a plethora of students from all over the world, and this ranking draws in many families because of the inclusivity and diversity of the school. This higher ranking also increases the popularity of LFA for international students. However, Tennyson said, "Rankings, for me, aren't necessarily the be all and end all. Rankings are what you make of them." For next school year, he wants the students, faculty and staff to not take the rankings for granted and stay dedicated to the work we're doing because in the end - it pays off. If we keep working hard like we are now, we should be in an even better place for next year's rankings. When talking about the community and campus life, Tennyson said that this year, he feels as though school spirit is coming back, and describes it as a, "Gust of wind at our backs." School spirit shows incoming students the love everyone has for LFA, and it also puts LFA on the radar to new students from all over the world. The ranking is a big accomplishment, and hopefully students at LFA will be very dedicated to keeping it for years to come.

Junior Class President Enos Zaah said, "I feel more pride for being here. Attending the 1st ranked school in Illinois and the 13th best national boarding school makes me feel very honored." The result of the ranking made students recognize the accomplishments that they have made as a

whole community. Zaah further elaborated, "I definitely feel like it is well deserved. A lot of seniors got into amazing colleges last semester, which I think plays a role, but I also think the ranking was impacted by the quality of education, and residential life." Last year's seniors getting into top colleges also made students



The construction site of the soon-to-be new Athletic Extension.

feel hopeful about their future prospects, knowing that their peers are achieving success. He further said, "Before coming to LFA, I checked out Niche for school information and reviews, just to make sure it is a right fit for me. I think it is a credible source of information." Before applying to LFA, many have used Niche as a resource to gather information and reviews about

LFA before enrolling. The positive reviews and increased ranking of LFA would influence future students' decisions to attend LFA, as it helps them assess if it's the right fit for their academic and personal goals. Also, ranked higher than most prestigious boarding schools, LFA would be noticed thoroughly, bringing students who are academically dedicated, thereby upholding our achievements even more. Maintaining our success is as important as improving it. As Zaah stated, "In order to maintain or achieve bigger success on any platform, we should maintain our hard work in academic terms, and continue our LFA pride and spirit during the rest of the school year." Students are motivated by our uplifted LFA pride to persevere in their studies, looking forward to maintaining the ranking of the school.

Furthermore, this ranking is a huge accomplishment for LFA. It continues to reflect on our community; we've come a long way, and our staff, faculty and students should be proud. Seeing as this is the highest LFA has ever been ranked by Niche, students seem to be motivated to stand by our achievements. This year, school spirit has already been elevated throughout the season with prep hockey games, pic-

nics, House Cup, and much more. LFA is looking forward to incoming students that are brought in by this ranking, and our next year's achievements. We hope that as a community, we can take a second to appreciate the hard work we all have done. The better we each are as individuals, the better our community can be as a whole for the following years to come!

Photo by Myles Haight



# Was the second attempt at Homecoming a success?

By Harry Luo

Managing Editor of Production

LFA's campus was alive with excitement as it celebrated its second Homecoming. From the outset, it was evident that this year's Homecoming was not just a continuation of the tradition of the school, but also a great leap from its previous year.

Homecoming is a tradition steeped in memories, camaraderie, and vibrant celebrations. Filled with festivities, Homecoming is an occasion for current students to engage with their predecessors and for former students to reconnect with their academic roots. At its core, Homecoming is an emblematic fusion of the past with the present, fostering com-

munity, spirit, and school pride. While the event often culminates in a school's home game and a dance, its essence is far richer, signifying unity, nostalgia, and the timeless bond shared among those who walk the hallowed halls of a school.

The buildup to Homecoming underscored the concerted efforts by the newly formed Homecoming group, which consists of the Student Council (StuCo), faculty, and the Caxy Athletics Team. An initiative to gather requests for the homecoming theme during Morning Meeting created discussions and excitement throughout campus. Further amplifying this anticipation were Madison Rosen '25 and Mimi Sexton '25 through the creation of the Homecoming poster – something that was absent last



Photo by Harry Luo

Glow in the dark decorations adorn Homecoming to match the theme..

year. As the days rolled on, the momentum intensified during Spirit Week, when students dressed up as different decades, Barbies, surfers, bikers, and more. In addition, Enos Zaah '25 magnified this fervor by producing a hype video, setting the stage for a celebration. Reflecting on the absence of a home hockey game, the Prefects and StuCo, in coordination with the Athletics faculty, put together a fierce Field Day competition among sports teams.

The Homecoming dance began with COAX taking the stage, delivering electrifying performances of popular rock music that excited the crowd. As music pumped and spirits soared, LFA's student DJ, David Yao '24, showcased his musical prowess with "The Sound of LFA." Both perfor-

mances reflected the excellence of LFA students in music, capturing the essence of the night and the spirit of the school.

StuCo's proactive involvement differentiates this year's Homecoming from the previous year. "We viewed Homecoming as both a rehearsal for the prom and a litmus test for team chemistry," stated All School President Jerry Ren '24'. This marked a transformative shift from LFA's first homecoming post pandemic, which relied heavily on the faculty and the Caxy athletics team for its organization.

Homecoming stood as a testament to the school's newly growing traditions and the synergy of its students. Without a doubt, students look forward to what next year's Homecoming will unveil.



Courtesy of @lfacademy on Instagram

An intense game of "skin-the-snake" takes place during LFA's first Field Day.

## LFA's diverse options for themed weekends

By Joon Lee

Managing Editor of STEM

Halfway through fall, Halloween and the autumn leaves welcome us to the new season. At LFA, we are back with more exciting fall activities awaiting the students. Featuring the Atlass Haunted Hunt and the Field Escape Room, there are a lot more options for students who are tired out from school. Kevin Ingram, one of the faculty members who planned some of the events, wanted to bring "excitement and the spooky atmosphere of Halloween to campus." LFA featured three weeks of October as the "October Vibe scale", introducing levels from one to three. Level one, fall vibes only, includes DIY Fall mugs and corn mazes. Level two, the feeling of fall with some spookiness, featured Halloween-themed movies and Atlass and Field's haunts. Lastly level three, "SCARE ME!" features the annual Dungeon and Doom Haunted House, one of the biggest haunted houses nationally. Can't forget the Halloween-themed dress day on the 31st, too!

Emily Kalis, Assistant Dean of Students: Residential and Campus Life, directs these weekend themes, and she indeed wanted something really specific in order to make students interested. The theme she

devised was Fall. Kalis wanted students to get "excited and encouraged to join activities, and even day students to join the residential life." For her, Halloween means "a holiday where you can let loose, have fun, be creative, and not take yourself too seriously." Following the previous two weeks, there is going to be the Six Flags Fright Fest and also the Student Council Fall Fest that is going to happen on the quad, with each class playing games and music.

Students who experienced some of the activities shared positive opinions. Matthew Jun '26 expressed, "It was beyond expected, and I can see a lot of effort was put into it." He described the Haunted Hunt as a great opportunity to meet up with friends and see frightening ghosts scaring them. Also, there were house points if you got tickets, so there was some competition, too. Moreover, the Field Haunted Escape Room was also impressive.

Anish Somu '24 said, "It was scary," and he "would like to go back again."

Compared to last year, LFA is back with more and diverse themed activities on campus. There are still a lot of weekends that are awaiting us, and more excitement that is upon us. Kalis and our faculty are working hard to make residential life feel full and students have the best experience at LFA, through being immersed in plenty of new themes and fun.



Faculty dress up in costumes to scare students.

Courtesy of @lfa\_housecup on instagram



# Changes in post-COVID travel policies

By Jason Xing  
Editor-in-Chief

With the decline of COVID-19 and the return of student travel, LFA has shifted gears in its plans to organize academic and cocurricular trips.

Before COVID, there existed a clear distinction between the two segments. Travel was driven by faculty interest, as the Stuart Center divided its attention into managing co-curricular trips and the Global Youth Leadership Institute (GYLI).

With COVID, the Stuart Center worked with third-party providers to recoup money lost from canceled programs as GYLI pivoted to online programming in 2021. Simultaneously, LFA--according to Erin English, Director of Experiential Learning--diverted funds from the Head of School Symposium to purchase testing supplies and PPP devices.

Between 2020 and 2022, LFA underwent changes in headship and dean-level positions. When travel opportunities resurfaced in 2022, all travel--curricular and co-curricular--was managed by the Stuart Center before reporting directly to the Head of School.

Historically, courses that included a curricular trip required a minimum of five students enrolled for the trip to run. Post-AP Chinese, French, and Spanish courses were not guaranteed travel, but a combination of the Human Rights curricular trip with Post-AP Spanish allowed thirteen students to travel to Cuba in March 2023. More importantly, the bigger the trip, the lesser the price point.

The relatively cheaper price point for curricular trips is a result of di-

rect funding by LFA, while co-curricular trips are paid from the pocket of the families of student participants.

Currently, the Stuart Center works with faculty to provide travel opportunities that grow students' global leadership competencies. This March 2024, the Global Department will combine the capstone and cohort sections for a trip to Costa Rica, offering students an immersive Spanish language experience. Furthermore, combining the Post-AP and AP Chinese courses allows LFA to offer a Chinese curricular trip to Taiwan. In March 2025, a French immersion experience will be among the trip offerings.

Accounting for travel accommodations alongside lower costs on airfare and similar services, the Stuart Center is seeking to garner a positive tradeoff in comfort for cultural awareness.

"When we take students on a curricular trip like the Human Rights Trip to Navajo Nation or The APES Trip to Nature Bridge in Olympic National Park, they're not staying in a hotel. They're staying in cabins," said Erin English. When students went to Guatemala, they were staying in a room of a hostel rather than a hotel. You are not being pampered in the way that you might when you stay comfortably in a hotel room, and you can save some money on accommodations in a way that allows you to have a different type of experience," English mentioned.

As of 2023, LFA's AP Chinese Language and Culture alongside the Chinese Cultural Studies class will travel to Taiwan in an effort to understand the social dynamics of a Chinese speaking country. The class will visit Taipei and Gaox-



Photo By Sam Wold

Students on the 2023 Cuba spring break Trip.

ling in March without a travel agency.

"I am very appreciative of the opportunity," said Ivy Jiang, Chinese teacher and the coordinator of the 2023 Taiwan Trip. "We want the students to be in the shoes of locals, taking the subway and buses as well as asking for directions." "If a travel agent or tour bus is in place, then it will limit the students' interaction with Taiwanese locals, not to mention the high cost that follows," Jiang expressed.

As for now, the price point for curricular trips is half that of a co-curricular trip. This allows the Stuart Center to expand on accessibility and financial aid opportunities for travel.

"Ideally, one of the programs on offer for next year will be at a significantly affordable price point with financial aid connected," said English. We plan to take students to a refugee camp in Greece to

examine the current refugee crisis and administer healthcare services to the individuals affected," English noted.

According to English, the trip includes airfare for under \$2,500, not to mention eyes on the ground to examine the camp's conditions and environment prior to arrival.

Going forward, "the curricular travel budget will be designed towards providing opportunities of experiential learning, providing the same immersive opportunities that may not be necessarily tied to a class," English mentioned.

If approved, this will resolve issues surrounding insufficient enrollment of curricular trips, making them less cost-restrictive and thus more equitable for all students.

With greater accessibility comes greater immersion. Therefore, we may see an increase in equity and access to travel in the years to come.

# Can't study on an empty stomach

By Myles Haight & Erin Cho

Managing of Photography and Digital Content & Assistant Managing Editor of Production

The scheduling system at LFA has proven to be a dynamic and student-centered approach that has distinguished Lake Forest Academy since the 1980s. Even though the block schedule system has provided a degree of flexibility, allowing for late starts, and early release, the

scheduling system has been questioned due to the absence of lunch periods for certain students. Students taking seven classes often lack lunch periods, and consume bagged lunches which mostly consist of sandwiches and processed foods.

Our current schedule and the way it works have a lot of benefits. Shannon Bradac, Registrar and College Counseling Office Manager, makes the schedules here at LFA that we use everyday. We use a block schedule system that has been in place since rough-

ly the 1980s. "It is a schedule that allows for the most flexibility," Bradac said. The way we have blocks and set time periods, allows for things such as late starts and early releases on D and G day. However, we didn't used to have both these late starts. Bradac said, "We added an extra late start ... to benefit students." She also added that there have been many studies on the benefits of sleeping in and mental health, and that is why they added it a couple years ago.

Our schedule has other benefits as well. Many other schools have little variety in the timing of their classes, meaning that you usually have the same class at the same time every day. However, this is very different at LFA. Bradac said, "You could have that first period class one day, but then it could be in the middle of the day another day, and then it's in the morning or the afternoon, not just in those awkward times of day." The current schedule has many benefits that separate it from other schools in the area.

However, many LFA students who take seven classes still find themselves without lunch some days. Students still have the

option of the bagged lunch, but miss out on that crucial social time. Bradac said that she, "tries to steer away from that," to include lunch. She believes that social time is, "so important" for students, so she always does her "best in the summer to find a way for students to have lunch." Many times, it is impossible to get around, and sometimes students don't have lunch; that is supposed to be understood when they take extra classes. However, on some occasions, like with Erin Cho '25, who only takes six classes, said she "still does not have lunch on E-days," showing that avoiding the 7th class does not solve the lunch issue in all cases. Bradac says that she never does it "without the students' explicit permission." LFA is moving away from this though, as a new rule on classes limits incoming freshmen to only six classes to ensure they have lunch, which Bradac thinks is "super beneficial in the long run."

Although the schedule here at LFA does have some flaws, it works very well and allows for late starts and early releases that benefit the whole student population.



Courtesy of Lake Forest Academy's website

Students enjoy lunch during their lunch period.



# “What’s so LFA?” Here are some of ours!

By Mimi Sexton & Liv Kelly  
*Managing Editor of Features and Social Media & Managing Editor of Op-Ed*

A common term heard all around Lake Forest Academy’s Campus is, “That’s so LFA.” This term is typically used to describe something outstanding and over the top that LFA does or offers for their students. There are countless examples of this, such as playing Mario Kart during all school meetings as a House Cup event, where all the students gather in Cressey to participate in a variety of different activities, from stacking cups to jump roping.

LFA isn’t a typical school; therefore, we offer and do things that are pretty uncommon at other schools. The Academy strives to make sure each individual student has a positive experience. A survey was sent out where the student body was polled on experiences that people have had that were considered “so LFA,” such as having a reindeer on campus right before Christmas break, having Santa on ice, and, food trucks on campus during the fall and spring season.

An older tradition that’s now returned recently that is “so LFA” is the End of Semester Treats. With all the parents that come together and make endless amounts of every possible sweet you could think of, it is hard to imagine a school community that cares more about the students. While students are stressed

over exams and worrying about what will come next, to have just about five minutes to walk around with a little bag while all the generous LFA moms give you the most thoughtful treats you could ask for, such as cookies, cupcakes, fudge, dumping and so much more, the only thought

of parents that care enough to make so many treats is almost like a big hug that says, “You can do it!” which is “so LFA.”

This is not the only event that feels “so LFA.” The All-School Handshake is probably the most “LFA” thing there is. Although it is pretty common now that

the Formal Gardens, shaking hands with every single person while overlooking the Caxy pond and the beautiful view of Reid, there really is not anything more LFA. It is a stellar example of LFA’s tight community, as well as exhibiting the beautiful campus we get to experi-



Courtesy of @lfacademy on Instagram

Students enjoy Lake Forest Academy’s annual tradition of the All-School Handshake.

is, “this is so LFA.” The parents are not paid for this, but instead contribute their own time and resources just so that the students will have a little moment of fun during such a stressful time. Especially during exams where the self pressure can become very intense, having a group

most students, when asked by potentially new families, alumni or really anyone that asks, “What is your favorite thing about LFA?” will answer with an enthusiastic, “The all school handshake,” what if that’s just because it is? As all students stand in a huge circle and walk around

ence each and every day that is just so lfa. Many students have fond memories tied to these events and look forward to these campus wide traditions. They, and we, are also looking forward to what might be offered in the future and be worthy of such affiliation.

# Some Caxy spirit with a dose of advice

By Theresa Fu & Ela Jain  
*Editor-in-Chief & Managing Editor of A&E and Podcasts*

## How do you research colleges thoroughly to find the right fit?

Have a standard beforehand encompassing what you want. This includes size, diversity, location, and majors. Browse the college website, scour their student newspaper, inspect social media for personal opinions, and don’t hesitate to reach out to current students or alumni.

## Best format to email adults with?

If you’re familiar with them, you can use more casual greetings. But overall, “hello” should suffice. “Dear” is antiquated (personally). Be brief, check your spelling, and have a purposeful subject line. Sign off with something nice – e.g. Best, Sincerely. Thanks,  
Ela & Theresa

## How do you get over stage fright?

First and foremost, stage fright is normal, and it is something that can be dealt with. Do it scared; it’s better than not trying at all. Over time, practice makes progress

and your talent shouldn’t be hidden away.

## Which box Mac and Cheese brand is the best?

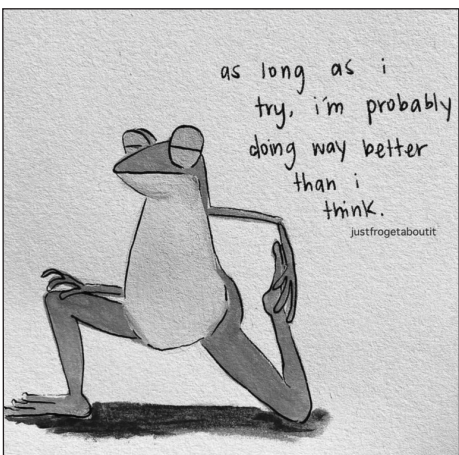
Undisputed: Annie’s Shells & White Cheddar :)

## Is typing in lowercase still cool?

For individuals who deliberately turn off the automatic casing in setting, we suppose that such effort can only be appreciated. However, whether or not it serves a function or adds meaning is questionable....

## How do I argue without crying?

One, it’s okay if you do cry while arguing



Courtesy of @justfrogetaboutit on Instagram

Fantastic frog gives an inspirational message.

– crying is a healthy emotion that doesn’t need to be suppressed and nobody should be shamed for it. On a second note, to answer your question, perhaps you can try pressing your tongue to the roof of your mouth, (the Chief Executive of Body Language Institute swears by this), or remove yourself from the situation – be it a brief break or scheduling your conversation for a different time.

## How do I still sound sophisticated without pulling out the Thesaurus?

Good ideas aren’t defined by fancy language. Stay true to yourself because often the best thoughts are conveyed via casual conversation. Plus, this way everyone can also understand what you’re trying to say without well... whipping out the Thesaurus.

## Should I buy a new laptop, or should I keep my [redacted] laptop alive for as long as possible?

Try calling up Mr. Hillebrand – our resident AP Micro and Macroeconomics teacher on campus – to weigh some opportunity costs.

## How do I make friends when I feel like everyone hates me?

Remember that oftentimes, how we per-

ceive ourselves in our head is not the same as how others view us. Most likely, people are too occupied with their own problems to form strong opinions on you– but even if they do, there are so many other people out there who can and will appreciate you for who you truly are. Be kind, and you’ll make friends in no time :).

## What TV show should I watch to cheer myself up?

She-Ra and the Princesses of Power

Over the Garden Wall

Good Place

Parks and Recreation

Derry Girls

## What do I do when I forget to order my English book for class?

Accept your fate – but genuinely, teachers are more willing to understand than one might think, (at least we hope!) especially if the book is mid-air flying to your home as we speak.

## How do I convince my parents to let me stay out late?

Claim. Evidence. Reasoning. Intro should include a hook, the conclusion needs to finish with a wow factor. Don’t forget citations.



# Assumptions and obscurity in navigating Safe Haven

By Theresa Fu, Ela Jain, Esti Rosenblatt, & Tanya Ganesh

*Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor of A&E and Podcasts, Managing Editor of Production, & Sports Director*

Within the LFA handbook, Safe Haven is referred to as a program designed to keep students safe in the case of involvement with drugs, alcohol, and/or other illegal substances. Accompanying the explanation is a long list, detailing the process a student struggling with substance related situations—(whether it’s abuse or a singular encounter)—will enter in the event they reach out for help. However, Safe Haven’s public perception can drastically differ from its true intent. In particular, when asked, some students equate the program to one that “snitches” on friends, while other students don’t know what it is at all.

Emily Kalis, Assistant Dean of Students: Residential Life and Campus Life, described the program by saying, “Safe Haven is a proactive program that encourages students who find themselves in a position they don’t want to be in—a way to make a good decision.” This pertains to the unwritten part of Safe Haven, where a student in an illegal situation can claim Safe Haven to secure their leave and be protected without facing usual disciplinary measures. This appears to be the most common understanding of Safe Haven, but this thought has also come riddled with obscurity, and hence misperceptions, including but not limited to the notion of “betraying” peers and “punishment” in the form of intervention.

What further fuels these false impressions is the lack of conversation surrounding this topic. Yes, the handbook includes



*Courtesy of Lake Forest Academy's website*

Data on the percentage of boarding to day students at LFA.

a section dedicated to Safe Haven, (though even that doesn’t provide clear information as to what will happen, if anything, to other students present when someone calls Safe Haven); however, the expectation that advisories thoroughly cover the handbook on an annual basis often falls short. Dress code, tardy and absence policies are covered at the start of the year, but there is typically little mention of Safe Haven or even LFA’s policies when it comes to substances. Despite advisors being directed to go over it explicitly, it can be a lackluster effort if it’s thought that the students already have familiarity. LFA’s four year Health, Wellness, and Community courses include discussions on the high school transition process and navigating peer pressure, but rarely mention Safe Haven policies. Dorm meetings always mention Safe Haven’s

protocol—but this doesn’t detract from the fact that the entirety of LFA’s student and teaching body, like the day population and non-residential faculty, should be more informed for Safe Haven to serve its purpose—which is to help students.

Jennifer Madeley, one of LFA’s two counselors, explained that “Each case is circumstantial and handled as such.” The rehabilitation services mentioned in Safe Haven’s description are meant to be adapted to a student’s unique conditions, and the authorities involved, (school counselors and the Dean of Students), are there to evaluate what’s needed. A student isn’t automatically entered into the program, and if an individual asks for help, it doesn’t so-called “jeopardize” everyone else in the situation. Once again, if these details were shared, there would

be less room for speculation and consequently damaging assumptions. What the Safe Haven system lacks most is clarity.

But, as these misunderstandings are still very present, students may be hesitant to use the program—an issue that is only exacerbated by a lack of parental alternatives for boarders. Teenagers often rely on their parents to pick them up and take them home in the case of an uncomfortable situation. Besides possibly being in trouble at home, the student does not risk what they view as the alternative Safe Haven option—“punishment” from school. This parent alternative is not a reality for boarding students. So, when a student is uncomfortable, they may feel as though Safe Haven is the sole resource.

Xitlali Ocote ‘25, a Ferry proctor, discussed how some students may feel uncomfortable with Save Haven’s policies given the role their dorm parents serve, as both “family” and faculty. “I think that because LFA is not just where we go to school, and instead it’s more a place where we sleep, eat, study, socialize, live etc., it makes it more complicated.” She continued, “Students know that if they speak up, it might more strongly affect all aspects of their lives.”

However, there are ways around this hesitation. First, clearing up the handbook. Most students don’t turn to LFA’s handbook in times of confusion, but if they do, it should be clear. Next, because it’s teachers, counselors or school leaders that students typically rely on for information, it’s important that LFA’s student body is clear on important policies. Students should know what is available to them in times of need. At the end of the day, students should be aware that at the very least, they can reach out to our school counselors to ensure they have a getaway and support system from an uncomfortable situation; faculty aren’t there to get students in trouble. Rather Safe Haven is a policy that intends to help students avoid exactly that.



*Photo by Jennifer Madeley*

Mrs. Madeley and Mrs. Dalia (pictured left to right) are the two counselors on campus; you can find them in the Health Center.



# Efforts to regain school spirit at LFA

By Emma Swanson & Mimi Sexton  
Managing Editor of Social Justice &  
Managing editor of Features and Social  
Media

School spirit has been a topic of discussion throughout this school year. Many students feel as if there is “something in the air,” creating a dull vibe that has been present throughout the past years at LFA. Whether it is the stress and tiredness that comes with the beginning months of this semester or the timidity that some students might feel to step outside of their comfort zone, our student bodies feel the void in spirit and are working to change it.

Our student leaders such as Student Council, Prefects, and Caxy Athletics Team have focused on being the student voice to help lead our community to better engagement and participation. Student Council has been working on this by assigning themed dress up days and school dances such as Homecoming. The Prefects have been working alongside Mr. Ackim Mpofu, Assistant Dean of Students: Student Leadership and Activities, on regaining excitement at all school meetings, Morning Meetings, and outside of the school day events as well.

Mpofu stated, “I would like to see more fun stuff in Morning Meetings where we showcase kids’ talent. If people want to do a skit, if people want to play an instrument, if people want to sing—I think we should be seeing that more; we want to celebrate you.”

By doing this, they hope that the attitude towards all school and Morning Meetings will become more positive and be a time of cheering and encouragement amongst our peers. In terms of House Cup competitions, The House Cup Prefects are working on improving the variety of activities to promote



Courtesy of @lfacademy on Instagram

Tug of war at LFA homecoming’s field day.

inclusivity amongst the student body.

Daniya Nussipbek ‘24 shared, “We plan on using Morning Meetings to ask students trivial questions about music, geography, and other topics to involve as many areas as possible. Students who are good at one thing should be able to use their skills to bring their house up to the top. We believe that the diversity of areas the House Cup incorporates could attract students of LFA full of different talents.” We have tried out some of these fresh ideas such as September Stick-It and Field Day, which have added some fun into the school air.

Aside from our Prefects on campus, the Caxy Athletics Team has also been tackling this issue from the sports aspect of LFA spirit. They have been looking to create more pack-the-house events and to offer help with senior nights to make

sure everyone feels that excitement and appreciation when doing their sport.

In terms of more on-campus engagement during the weekends, Emily Kalis, Assistant Dean of Students: Residential Life and Campus Life, has been working to plan new activities for both boarders and day students who are looking for activities over the weekend. She was working with teachers in Atlss and Field to create their own haunted house competitions this October, has implemented themed weekends such as Harry Potter Weekend with an infamous Quidditch match, and has added new off-campus excursions, such as farmers markets and trips to the city on the weekend schedule. With that being said, it is clear that our student leaders and teachers are both working towards regaining our school spirit through planning engaging ac-

tivities for our student body. However, there is only so much they can do. Most of the responsibility lies in our own hands. It is up to the students to attend these activities and step out of their comfort zone to truly make a large impact in rebuilding our school spirit.

Mpofu spoke about athletic games stating, “Intentionality is so important. Also, being able to relate. That’s something that we underrate so much. People come to your games, but you don’t go to theirs, yet you expect people to show up. It doesn’t work like that. A community is supposed to work together.” Collaboration is key and we must all contribute, no matter how it may be, in order to make it as exciting and uplifting as we all want it to be.

Even Kalis shared, “One thing I have noticed that has always been successful in the past has been just showing up and also kind of feeding into the little bit of silliness that we do at LFA.”

As a community, we need to keep building and developing an encouraging environment for each other so we feel comfortable to embrace that silliness, whether that’s dressing up crazy on themed dress days, or to getting up during All School Meetings and trying something that we may have never done before. We need to make the conscious effort to go out to our sports games and cheer for our teams, even if one may not know everyone on that team. It’s about cheering each other on as a community and embracing our loving student body. Along with the efforts our leaders are making to grow spirit, we need to make an effort as well, and only then, will we see a real change to our school spirit. Our sports games can be crazy, our all school meetings can be the highlights of our day, our weekends can be even more memorable on campus—but only if we make the effort.



Excitement is on display at a Girls Volleyball game.

Courtesy of LFA SmugMug



# Editorial: Student Leadership & Equity

At LFA, there appears to be plenty of opportunities for student leadership. From the Prefects, Student Council, the Disciplinary Committee, to various club positions, and more. There are numerous roles that students can inhabit. Here, it is clear that student leadership is a necessary part of not only representing student voices, but also preparing students for the future. Having the opportunity to lead in an environment like LFA where mistakes and new ideas are welcomed is critical for students to develop the skills needed before transitioning to college, applying to internships, and being a leader in the workforce. But, with such an advantageous reality, there are naturally faults.

For one, an issue lies in who those leadership positions are truly available to. There are a myriad of uncontrollable factors that prohibit, or at least significantly disadvantage students from obtaining such roles. Most glaringly, transfer students, especially those who transfer in 11th grade and up, are far less likely to become Prefects or members of the DC committee. When these positions are decided based heavily on the quantity of teacher recommendations, these students can only obtain a fraction of the possible pool with the shorter period of time they have to foster working relationships with faculty. Simultaneously, teachers that leave the LFA community can cause similar effects. It is impossible to be rec-

ommended for these positions by those who have left LFA, leading to a problem that has only been exacerbated with the number of departures we've seen in the past few years. Equity is crucial to broadening the representation in our leadership circles, but there is an evident unintentional advantage given to students who haven't had teachers leave or those who are not transfer students because of the recommendation system used.

Similarly, with the fact that many leadership positions heavily rely on the influence or decision-making of faculty, students themselves may begin to approach the process inauthentically. The likeability-based election process inevitably breeds an environment of fakeness. There shouldn't be conversations about appealing to teachers junior year to secure recommendations. There shouldn't be any talk at all about putting on a facade to win someone's favor. That, intrinsically, takes away from the very responsibility a leader is supposed to embody, which is to represent and not dominate peers. Not to mention, it is blatantly unfair to others when individuals believe they are all-deserving of a position they've failed to show commitment to before. Perhaps this attitude will lead to something in name, but ingenuine motivations won't bring the actual change needed to the community.

This mentality can especially be felt when students turn their positions into a platform that misrepresents the purpose their

role holds. An implicit hierarchy shouldn't form between students with "a title" and those without. Leadership can only thrive from support and a will to listen – that's why, the root of several if not all LFA roles is to serve as a liaison. Be it connecting students to administration, representing student interest, or other area groups, leaders are an extension of the student body and not above it. Even in the fight for leadership, students have begun treating it as a test to determine who's "better" by comparing on-paper qualifications and will invalidate others who are selected. Whether by disrespecting confidentiality by holding private conversations in the open, or assertions of assumed power, there shouldn't exist a sense of othering or alienation of the very people a leader should be leading.

That all being said, this is not an individual problem. Rather, it's a problem with the general system, the byproduct of a school culture where we equate student leaders to being the best that LFA has to offer. When that perception bleeds into our interactions and detracts from what leadership is supposed to offer, that is where the issue arises.

High school leadership is all but guaranteed to contain bias. It is a reality that our community should acknowledge and confront rather than shove under the rug beneath veiled intentions. It is only then that we can make student leadership as effective and meaningful as possible.

The Lake Forest

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*The Spectator* is published seven times per year by the students of Lake Forest Academy and is a forum for student expression. The views and reporting herein are the sole product of *The Spectator's* student reporters and in no way reflect the official views of Lake Forest Academy faculty, staff, administration or Board of Trustees.

## EDITORIALS

Opinions of the staff are presented in the form of unsigned editorials. Personal views are bylined or presented as formal dissents.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

*The Spectator* welcomes responses to its articles in the form of Letters to the Editors in addition to letters on subjects of the author's choosing. Please e-mail Letters to the Editors to Mrs. Krause at [akrause@lfanet.org](mailto:akrause@lfanet.org)

## CORRECTION

*The Spectator* has made a correction for the article: Jiawei "Jerry" Ren: All School President. Jiawei Ren - along with many students - have completed the ALEKS pie during freshman year. Check [caxynews.com](http://caxynews.com) for the additional information.

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity."  
-Amelia Earhart



Scan for the Advice Column!



# What's up, Young Alumni? Life, so



Issei Terada '23

*Courtesy of @Issei\_Uno\_Fifth on Instagram*

## Issei Terada '23

This year's biggest change is my environment after graduating from LFA because I had to handle studying and my music career when I was still at school. Now, I'm able to work on my music full-time. It doesn't mean I hated studying at LFA; the things I've learned and earned have strongly impacted my art. I am thrilled that I can focus on exactly what I want, which is music for me. Not only has my art developed, but also I've got some good results. One of my songs hit #25 on Japan's Billboard Hot 100 and got offers from three big Japanese labels. However, my main goal is to be a worldwide artist, so I have yet to sign any deals with Japanese companies.

My daily life is different now because I don't have specific classes or club activities. Sometimes, I stay in the studio recording the whole day; sometimes, I have live shows, meetings, video shootings, and modeling. But if I had a week off, I would like to visit New York or Paris. I'm planning to build my clothing brand. Music and fashion have a strong relationship, and I travel to get inspiration. Also, I plan to spend time with my family and friends. Family and friends motivate me, and it's always a precious moment for me to spend time with people who support and love me, so I want to show them love back. I remember there were three people at the first live shows I've ever done. But within a year, there are hundreds of people coming to see my shows, and on the stage, I can be the real me.

Until the last project, I was mainly focusing on the Japanese market. My next project will be for people in the US and internationally. All the songs will be in English, and I just shot for one of my upcoming songs with Canon, the camera company. This project will be a transition for me since the market I'm focusing on will change. I might lose some Japanese fans, but I'm fearless and love taking risks. As for doing art, the priority should be, "What exactly do you want to do?" I would say, "Don't think about what people will think about you or be scared of judgment." It's always you win some, you lose some - so I'm always ready.

## Turbo Varongchayapul '20

Living through snowstorms and Nor'easters has got to be the biggest thing for me, coming from Thailand where snow is very much non-existent. I plan my travels mostly to get away from the horrible New England weathers and gained a huge appreciation for solo trips in the process. I've done three solo trips so far to San Francisco, Miami, and London. I also had the opportunity to learn wake surfing and scuba diving from my friends, so I guess I'm cool now? And my biggest academic highlights are publishing a research article as first author on Organic Syntheses, and I was nominated for the Royal Society of Chemistry Certificate of Undergraduate Excellence this year.

I usually hit the gym in the morning before my first class. Then I go to classes which are not a lot, usually two or three classes each day with a lunch break in between. Then after classes I have four things I do--not in any particular order--respond to emails, meet with my tutees and mentees by appointment, go to lab and do some chemistry, and finish my psets (problem sets, aka homework in MIT lingo). There are days that I don't have time for the morning gym and have to run errands, so if I run errands in the morning, I will hit the gym at night before the gym closes at 11pm. I try to sleep before midnight, but if the psets are bad, usually 2am.

MIT is a very diverse community. Not only are there people from all corners of the world, but the community is also highly diverse skill-wise and talent-wise. Everyone brings a unique skillset to share with the community, and everyone is enthusiastic to appreciate or learn new skill sets. I definitely have lots of respect for my peers, and I ended up learning many things from just being around talented and intelligent people. It's a unique feeling to be surrounded by people that possess skills you aspire to have one day and actually get to learn it from these people.



Turbo Varongchayapul '20

*Courtesy of @ceelapat on Instagram*



Montgomery Gold '23

*Courtesy of @montgomeryhold on Instagram*

## Montgomery Gold '23

The academic family system pairs "married" 3rd years with 1st years who become their "children". Primarily, academic families hang out at social events and parties that build up to the giant Raisin Weekend, where academic parents challenge their kids to compete in challenges such as running into the sea at 40 degrees Fahrenheit and the cross-town scavenger hunt. For our scavenger hunt, my academic parents challenged us to have a breadstick sword fight on the quad, perform a music video to songs from *High School Musical 2*, and create a cult alongside numerous other things we had to find.

The St. Andrews community is very friendly and open as there are so many societies for different interests and activities. One society of note that I am in is the Shire of Caer Caledon, a Medieval Reenactment and Living History society that takes full advantage of St. Andrews medieval past. It has leatherworking, sewing, storytelling, singing, and most importantly fighting, where we learn how to wield medieval-styled weapons like swords and spears in a safe manner and put on a good show fight in preparation for a reenactment in the spring.

Besides working on readings and essays, I am currently a member of my Hall Committee as a Social Events Representative, responsible for planning and executing social events in the hall. Recently, we had our America Night in which the many Americans in my hall were able to celebrate our culture by doing the most American things possible. In the next few weeks we have plenty of Halloween events planned, so I will be plenty busy with those.



# School & homes away from home

## Alumni Q and As



Courtesy of @ferdossibr on Instagram  
Ferdoss Ibrahim '22

**Question:** “What does a day in life like at school look like? Take us through it.”

**Tyler Watts:** “Each day tends to look a bit different, but it’s some general combination of the following elements: coffee, class, work, lots of reading, and lots of writing. There is always some serendipitous moment that occurs as well, things I couldn’t have planned for but that end up changing the course of my day or shaping the rest of my experiences. My friends and I are very busy people, but we do our best to spend time whenever we can. I like to spend a lot of time alone here as well; it’s great for getting new ideas and thinking about life.”

**Bela DeJesus '22 attending Pomona College:** “Every day looks different! I will wake up from 8-9 (depending on the day) and either go to class or work out. I have classes at three of the five colleges in the Claremont Consortium, so I usually get a good walk in the mornings. I head to my second class of the day after a lunch with friends. The rest of the day consists of dinner with friends, homework, lifeguarding and/or a club meeting. Last year, we won the Scottish championships for our hockey division—we were moved up and now play against teams all across the UK. I also interned for MBDA—a nuclear missile development company—and was able to create vast STEM connections.”

**Sano Rutatika '22 playing basketball at University of West Florida:** “On a typical Monday, I wake up at around 6:30, eat a light breakfast and get ready for practice that starts at 8. We practice for about two-and-a-half hours. I go back to my apartment, take a shower, grab my laptop and notebooks for my Literature and Earth Science class. After class, we then have a team lift session at 4:15pm that ends around 5pm. Me and some of my teammates play on the court for about 40 minutes and head back to our apartment at around 6pm. I take a shower and do some homework, and I eat dinner. After dinner, I get some more homework done and start getting ready for bed. Once I’m in bed, I watch film from practice and *SUITS* (I’m currently on season 6). Finally, at around 11pm, lights are out and I’m sleeping.”



Courtesy of @kishi64r\_r on Instagram  
Riko Kishitani '23

**Question:** “What is your current favorite snack, meal or restaurant?”

**Riko Kishitani '23 at University of Washington:** “My favorite restaurant is the Chinese restaurant where you get your own hotpot bowl. You pick whatever you want and put them in your bowl, and they cook that in a hotpot. It’s delicious. The little coffee vending machine right outside of my math lecture room is awesome. It doesn’t take long, it’s hot, and it’s got some seasonal flavors too like pumpkin latte, and it’s way cheaper than the actual cafe.”

**Erdem Güdaydin '22 attending University of Illinois at Chicago:** “My favorite place to go that is near my college is Little Italy in Chicago. It is a great place to find good food and smiling faces. My favorite meal is the Chili Mac MRE (Meal Ready to Eat) which I get from my unit in the Army.”

**Mariana Quiroz:** “There’s a really good Chinese place called Corner 17. They have a window into the kitchen so you get to watch the chefs make everything while you wait for your food. I’ve gone there a bunch with friends, and they just recently opened a location on WashU’s campus! I also love getting hot chocolate as a little sweet treat at the end of the day.”



Courtesy of @spooky\_07 on Instagram  
Tyler Watts '21

**Question:** “What is your college community like?”

**Yutan Jin '22 attending University of Pennsylvania:** “The student community here at the University of Pennsylvania is highly competitive and pre-professional. Students generally spend a lot of time networking, coffee-chatting, interviewing, and searching for internship or research opportunities. However, the people here usually remain rather courteous and respectful toward each other despite the competitive atmosphere.”

**Mimi Osborne:** “As I’m in a different country, the community is incredibly diverse. It is incredibly interesting to see so many different cultures interweave with each other; in this aspect, it is almost like LFA.”

**Bela DeJesus:** “My community at college consists of many pockets of friends and peers that I am privileged enough to have in my life. Friends are my strongest community, and I have also found community with the Latin students at Pomona and clubs like CSWA.”

**Ferdoss Ibrahim:** “Northeastern is a pretty large school, so you get a little bit of everything. I wish I could say it was a collaborative environment, but it’s pretty competitive and feels as if it’s every man for themselves at times. Especially being a pre-med student, everyone is trying to get a clinical position at the best hospitals in the world that so happen to be in Boston; meanwhile, down the street and river is BU, Harvard, MIT, BC, and Tufts. Being said, the school is big enough to find a supportive community, which is exactly what I did.”



# Kevin McCarthy making history: Ousted as speaker of the House

By Chloe Jhin

Managing Editor of Politics

On January 7th of 2023, California Representative Kevin McCarthy became the Speaker of the House of Representatives, winning against New York Representative Hakeem Jeffries. After one of the United States' historically longest elections for speaker, McCarthy finally won in a 216 to 212 vote after a total of 15 ballots. As some Republicans from the Freedom Caucus, a group of right-winged representatives, had originally disfavored McCarthy, they ultimately changed their minds after a certain meeting was held. McCarthy and these members of the caucus crafted a political deal that would allow him to be voted as speaker, but also made certain concessions to members of the caucus: a rule to grant Freedom Caucus members three seats on the Rules Committee and, more importantly, to allow one House member to introduce a vote to remove the speaker. Out of his desire to take the position, McCarthy agreed to these concessions, which eventually led to a landmark event in the course of the United States's history: the first time ever the Speaker of the House of Representatives was removed from their position.

In early October, fellow Republican and Florida Representative Matt Gaetz set the motion to oust McCarthy from his position, ultimately leading to the historical moment. Within the four days of deciding whether to remove McCarthy, there had been a meeting with the Democrats planned, in which they were going to consider supporting McCarthy and vote to keep him in his place.

If McCarthy originally had the support of his opposing party, then why did he completely lose their votes in the remaining days before the official decision

was made? It all started on October 1st, when McCarthy went on *Face the Nation* with its current moderator Margaret Brennan to discuss the 45-day funding bill, Gaetz's claims about ousting him, and his plan to aid Ukraine. Throughout the interview, McCarthy thought it would be best to repeatedly emphasize that "the Senate has done nothing," specifically when talking about the appropriation bill, along with all the other bills he claims the Senate has not passed.

After spending most of the interview speaking poorly about the Democrats, McCarthy did not end up gaining support from them whatsoever. This can best be seen from the results of the day he was ousted, in which the people who were in favor of his removal included the majority of the Democratic Party and eight members from his own fractured party. When asked in an interview about whether the U.S. is more divided than ever before, History Department Chair Jessica Kapadia stated "The fact that the speaker has never been ousted before is an example that we are very divided and willing to be more drastic."

With the speaker of the House role vacant, Congress has been in a state of paralysis. Until the House of Representatives could officially replace the vacancy, North Carolina Representative Patrick McHenry was designated as the placeholder for this role.

Besides delaying funding the government to avert a shutdown scheduled for November, Congress has not been able to govern properly and take action because of the empty seat, specifically by not funding aid for Ukraine nor making decisions in regard to the Israel-Hamas War. When asked about how the vacant position was impacting the government, Kapadia stated, "Ousting our own speak-



Courtesy of @rom\_brenner on Instagram

Kevin McCarthy speaks in a rambling press conference moments after being ousted as speaker.

er sends a message of instability, and that is dangerous from an American perspective, given that the United States has historically asserted itself in world affairs very powerfully. Whether it has been positive or negative, right or wrong, that has traditionally been America's doings, especially its relationship with NATO." Kapadia further explained that this is not the first time that America has not been stable, and that it is crucial for America to look balanced as a nation. With that, the position needed to be filled very quickly, as it is important for the government to return to its own matters, as well as to keep

up with the ongoing international affairs.

Ever since McCarthy's removal and his statement about not running for speaker again, there was a race between Ohio Representative Jim Jordan and Louisiana Representative Steve Scalise to occupy the position of speaker. However, on October 20th, the Republicans, once again, decided to go against their own by dropping Jordan as their nominee for the role, leaving them back to square one. However, on October 25th, the Republicans finally came to a unanimous agreement to elect their fourth nominee Louisiana Representative Mike Johnson as speaker with 220 votes, surpassing the 215-vote requirement to win the gavel.

As Congress moves forward with its new speaker, there is still hope that the two opposing parties can not only remain collaborative with their own members, but also work together as one united legislature. In severe and sudden cases like these, we can only expect or predict so much with the given circumstances. With that, we can only hope that these situations can continue to be solved. When asked about how we, as a republic, are going to get out of our current state, Kapadia explicitly stated, "We all have our values and things that matter to us based on our backgrounds, identities, experiences, political beliefs, and economic situations. The major thing we always try to teach in our history classes is about humanity and how that always has to come first. We can disagree over how to get there, but our actions have to reflect our care for humans first. As a country, we do and we want to, so there has to be some hope there."



Courtesy of @drewangerer on Instagram

Jim Jordan pauses in disappointment after being voted out by his own political party in the race for a House Speaker.



# Rising tensions: Unpacking the India-Canada conflict

By Myles Haight  
Managing Editor of Photography and  
Digital Content

Although across the world from each other, India and Canada, are in the midst of a peaceful conflict. Both counties had a stable relationship and growing trade beforehand, so what happened seemingly overnight to spark this situation?

It started September 18 of 2023, when the Canadian Prime minister Justin Trudeau claimed that he had credible information connecting India and the assassination of a Canadian Sikh activist Hardeep Singh Nijar. Nijar was an outspoken supporter of a separatist Sikh state called Khalistan that would include lands in India. India is very opposed to Khalistan as the movement is completely banned in India and is considered a national security threat. Trudeau said in the Canadian House of Commons, “Any involvement of a foreign government in the killing of a Canadian citizen ... is an unacceptable violation of our sovereignty.” He also said that he wasn’t trying to “provoke” or “escalate” the situation, but he was only “laying out the facts.”

India, however, denied the allegations, with its foreign ministry saying in a statement, “We reject any attempts to connect Government of India to such developments” also are calling Canada’s claims “absurd and motivated.”They then accused Canada of harboring terrorists and claimed



Courtesy of Creative Commons

Leaders of Canada and India Justin Trudeau and Droupadi Murmu meet before the start of their geopolitical conflict.

that Canada’s inaction towards extremists had been a “long-standing” concern. India also started denying all visas to Canadian citizens blaming security threats. After making the claims, Canada expelled a senior Indian diplomat from the country, which was a “consequence” according to Canada’s foreign affairs minister. India soon followed by expelling a senior Canadian diplomat. Both diplomats were

important to their countries’ intelligence. Hardeep Singh Nijars death was shocking to his fellow Sikh community members. Nijar was gunned down outside of a community center this June. Canadian police have not yet made any arrests, however, they have been questioning three suspects. Canada has the highest number of Sikhs outside of India, with around 770,00 people practicing Sikhism in the county.

Tensions recently escalated even further when India told Canada it needed 41 Canadian diplomats and their families living in India to leave the country before October 20th and threatened to have their diplomatic immunities revoked if Canada did not comply. This cuts the amount of diplomats Canada had in India by about two thirds. This hurts Canada because India has been Canada’s largest source of new migrants.

# Overturn of Texas ban on drag shows

By Jessie Ji  
Managing Editor of Podcasts

On September 26, 2023, federal judge David Hittner struck down a Texas law banning drag performances, claiming that it was unconstitutional and such bans infringed on the First Amendment. The original ban on drag performance, based on the Senate Bill 12 issued by the Republican State Senate Bryan Hughes, claimed to protect children from sexually

orientated performances. After hearing the ruling from the Federal Court, the Texas Attorney Office said that they would continue to appeal even to the Supreme Court. Though Texas is still considering to defend S.B.12 the Supreme Court, so far the verdict has been a huge victory embraced by LGBTQ+ community—the ruling validated their freedom of expression. Brigitte Bandit, one of the plaintiffs on this lawsuit and also an Austin-based drag performer, stated that she was relieved

and grateful for this ruling: “My livelihood and community has seen enough hatred and harm from our elected officials. This decision is a much needed reminder that queer Texans belong and we deserve to be heard by our lawmakers.” Drag’s earliest presentation can be traced back to the Shakespearean age, where men dressed up in theaters to play the roles of female characters. By the early 20th century, drag balls were considered illegal and a social taboo to the outside world, but continued to exist as an important secret tunnel to the creation and maintenance of underground queer subculture. Since the Harlem Renaissance, [drag] has gained more public visibility; gradually, it has become viewed not only as a liberation and autonomy of one’s own body and desire, but also a complex and nuanced de-construct in which societal bounds and differences in social status can be forgotten. Outcasted, marginalized, yet never exhausted. The 1990s documentary film *Paris is Burning* documented the drag culture interwoven by black, latino, gay, and transgender communities. The camera captured the dazzling participants in the ballroom, putting on the most prodigious, extravagant gowns, fiercely dominating the dance floor. As one interviewee said,

“In real life you can’t get a job as an executive unless you have the educational background and the opportunity...In a ballroom you can be anything you want. You’re not really an executive but you’re looking like an executive. You’re showing the straight world that I can be an executive if I had the opportunity because I can look like one, and that is like a fulfillment.” In the winding history of being misinterpreted, misunderstood, and falsely criminalized, drag queens are not the issue. “I think politicians know that it’s wrong to hate people biasedly, and they use children as a means to unify people because people all believe children are innocent and should all be protected from harm,” commented Jessica Kapadia, Department Chair of History & Social Sciences. Essentially, it is political rhetoric that assumes the relation in dragging and forbidden homosexuality, explicit sexual innuendo, or harm to children. Drag, like any other common public occurrences, post no harm. yet was a constant subject of criminalization. Just as the ruling invalidating Texas’s ban on drag reads: “Drag shows express a litany of emotions and purposes, from humor and pure entertainment to social commentary on gender roles.”



Courtesy of @the.diamonte on Instagram

A Dallas drag queen, Dia Monte, poses in a fabulous gown under the spotlight.



# Highlights of the fall sports season



LFA Prep Hockey team huddles during one of their home games.

**By Quinn Knight & Ford Sweet**  
*Managing Editor of Sports & Managing Copy Editor*

Celebrations have erupted surrounding sports during the fall season at LFA, as we’ve seen talented wins, shattered records, and loads of skill all throughout our campus. Based on the impressive teamwork and dedication shown, this fall was one to remember for many sports teams. While LFA sports transfer to the winter season, LFA expects to see a lot more success, fostering the school’s sports excellence.

As the school year is beginning, many of us prepare ourselves to watch an exciting and skillful Prep Hockey team. Every year, the team finds a new group of talented players and builds a connected group of competitors. It’s never easy to play alongside an unfamiliar group of people, yet, Prep Hockey got off to a quick start and won their first tournament just weeks into the season. They made the journey to St. Catherines Ontario, and took down several teams before winning the championship in overtime against Upper Canada College.

Evan Stastny ‘24, a captain for this year’s Prep Hockey team stated, “Winning the first tournament helped the team morale go up, and set the tone for what kind of season they were heading towards.” It served as a precedent for how the season would continue, since success is on the team’s mind. Not only that, but finding success to start the year brought the team closer together and developed several profound friendships that would live on this year and beyond. It is always an accomplishment to win a championship, or even a game, yet to do both to start the year is incredible and is not to be overlooked.

A team that doesn’t have as much of a following is the LFA Varsity Boys Golf team. Although accomplishments have been apparent in the past, this year saw several new milestones. The golf team went undefeated in conference play (6-0) and had

impressive wins against high school powerhouses like Warren Township, Vernon Hills, Deerfield and finished out the season with a tight win against Carmel Catholic. This season was one to remember for Boys Golf as the success on paper was sweet, but this was a team with much depth of skill at the Varsity level. Out of the nine members that played for Varsity, all nine had their scores count for at least one of the matches. This is significant because in the golf matches against other schools, only the top four scores of the day are counted, so to have nine guys’ scores count throughout the season was a big accomplishment. Fitz Knight ‘27, the only freshman on this year’s team, said in relation to the success of the year, “Some of our factors were our teamwork and our strength in numbers.

Coach Wetherbee stated, “It shows our team was great when of all nine guys

who played varsity—all of them had a score count.” This team capped off an impressive display of a year by winning the ISL Championship, beating Chicago Lab School by seven shots, with four out of the six LFA players in the top 10 and all six being within the top 15 out of 40 participants. Achieving second place at the tournament and being the top LFA scorer, Knight described what the accomplishment of this title meant to him, saying, “This season to me was very thrilling as it was my first year at LFA, and it was an honor to play with my Varsity teammates. I look forward to hopefully repeating as ISL champion and our continued success for my next three seasons.” Plus, with only three seniors this season, there is a great deal of hope that the success will continue into the years to come.

Another impressive feat that took place

was earlier this season, Tuana Turhan ‘24 set a new record of 59.55 seconds in the 100 M butterfly. In talking about breaking records, Turhan said, “Breaking a record means a lot to me in swimming because it makes me feel like I contributed to LFA’s athletic accomplishments.” Turhan is one of the top swimmers at LFA and was a big part of the ISL title the girls’ team won last year. When asked about what was going through her head at that moment, she said, “I try to stay in the moment and give all my focus to the event I’m doing when I swim.” Turhan also reflected on the importance of honing the mental side of swimming just as much as the physical aspect. As for what advice she’d give to other athletes, she stated, “My advice would be to train hard and have fun when you do it. Records are meant to be broken, so never lose hope.” This has been crucial to her and her athletic success, and she recommends this mindset for others as well. This LFA fall sports season has been a magnificent trip full of triumphant moments, teamwork, and record-breaking accomplishments. Our sports teams’ commitment and teamwork have produced a season that will live on in the memory of everyone who saw it. The fire of athletic accomplishment at LFA continues to burn brightly as we enter the winter sports season. The fall season has left an indelible mark on our campus, with numerous incredible moments and new names adorning record boards and trophies. The next wave of LFA athletes will definitely be motivated by the history of commitment, teamwork, and excellence, and ensure that the tradition of sportsmanship and success endures in our school’s athletic community.

Courtesy of @dave.atas\_photography on Instagram



LFA Boys Golf team stands with their conference winning scores.

Photo by Ben Wetherbee



# Athletes' experience when applying to college

By Mimi Sexton & Tanya Ganesh

Managing Editor of Features and Social Media & Sports Director

Navigating the college process as a student athlete has both its benefits and challenges. The recruiting process athletes go through requires a lot of hard work and commitment, which requires the athlete to have a strong support team with them throughout the process. As athletes get older, the opportunities you have to advance in your sport start to shrink, so making it to play a sport at the collegiate level is a considerable accomplishment. Andrew Poska, the Dean of College Counseling at LFA, dislikes the, “misperception that a division two or division three athlete is third rate or second rate” as these athletes “have come a long way...and are very accomplished.”

Compared to the typical admissions process, the recruiting process starts much earlier and can begin around sophomore year. Natalie Frekko '24, who made a D3 commitment to Haverford College for lacrosse, shared that her, “junior year was much more challenging” and that she, “took that sacrifice knowing my senior year would be much easier.” Frekko had to do lots of the college prep that seniors would typically be doing. So with the load of the academics, athletics, and managing the college process, it put a lot on her plate.

A big part of this process is self-advocacy, reaching out to coaches and trying to be seen at prospective camps. At the same time, a majority of this process lies between a screen, which can lead to a lot of uncertainty in where an athlete relies on the coach for where they are interested in a potential roster. Frekko explained, “I



Courtesy of Stuart Rodgers Photography.

Natalie Frekko '24 plays Girls Varsity Lacrosse at LFA.

learned pretty quickly that coaches can say one thing on email but it might not be the same in person.” She continued, “There can be a lot of under the table things...you never really know where you’re going until you are committed.”

Along with skill and academics, trust is a huge factor in what to look for throughout the recruiting process. “For me, I found a coach that I knew I could trust,” she said. Frekko stressed the importance of seeking out coaches that “are good people” and you could see yourself being “accepted and comfortable” for the next four years. Since the coaches have such a big role in college as a student athlete.

Athletes, when going back and forth with

coaches, Poska said, “All interest is good interest” and “interest informs.” Both of these being vital to the process because if a coach is interested in possibly recruiting an athlete, there needs to be reciprocated interest back to the coach. You need to put yourself out there to the coaches during the recruitment process. At the beginning of the process, when still navigating the way through the process, the athlete shouldn’t turn away any coach.

Poska also said after interacting with coaches you need to take a moment and “start to reflect on the non-athletic side of things and what is important for you in a college experience.” Being a committed athlete heavily influences your daily

schedule for an entire year. When picking the college that is right for you, the student-athlete needs to decide how they want their work-life balance to be as well.

This balance is vital to any student. In Frekko’s case, lacrosse did not only benefit the admissions process, but also served as a great benefit for academic opportunity. Frekko shared, “I always knew that if I could play lacrosse in college, then I wanted to” and, “It also helps with the lower and lower acceptance rates; being an athlete gives you a big push in the admissions process. I knew I could get into a school of higher academics with lacrosse than without.”

Another significant benefit to the athlete recruitment experience is the weight that is lifted during what is known to be one of the most stressful times of the high school experience—the first semester of senior year. Frekko reflected, “It’s honestly a big relief...this year has been so fun for me because I feel like I’ve been able to really enjoy my classes.” She continued, “It’s crunch time right now for a lot of my friends; they are going through a lot, but I am glad that I’ve been able to take a step back and enjoy my senior year.”

Another advantage of participating in a sport in college is the immediate sense of community you get. Frekko explained, “You get this immediate friend group... if you ever want to grab a meal or ask for help, it’s great to know that I will have somebody.” She clarified, “Obviously, it doesn’t have to be your entire world, but I think it can be a really cool way to start off your college experience.”

The college process for athletes can be very challenging, and confusing, but in the end, it can have many benefits to the student both academically and athletically.



LFA alumni, Tatum Young '23, shares her recruitment signing with the basketball team.

Photo by Dave Atas



# The economic impact of Taylor Swift

By Liv Kelly

Managing Editor of Op-Ed

Since her debut in 2006, Taylor Swift has taken the world by storm and has risen to a level of fame very few have been able to reach. Swift is not only making killer music, but she is also producing groundbreaking revenue for the United States economy.

In 2023, Swift began her Eras Tour, a three-and-a-half hour performance that travels through her multiple albums, or as her and her fans call them, “eras.” Despite generating millions of dollars for Swift and her team alone, the Eras Tour also generated close to five billion dollars in consumer spending within just the United States. It is estimated that \$1300-\$1500 are spent per fan on travel, hotels, and outfits. This of course has a large impact on the local economy and small businesses in the area, so much so that the Illinois governor credits Swift with restoring Illinois tourism. Within local business, there has been bead and sequin shortages (fans use them to make exchangeable friendship bracelets). For the stadiums that she performs at, she is having a larger impact than the Super Bowl. Each weekend of her tour, she generates the equivalent of two-to-three Su-



Photo by Liv Kelly

The opening screen of begins the concert during Taylor Swift's Eras Tour.

per Bowls. Funny enough, this isn't the only impact on the NFL that she has had.

As of the last couple months, relationship rumors surrounding Swift and Chiefs tight end, Travis Kelce, have boosted the NFL viewership by millions. At the first game that she attended, the Chiefs vs. Jets game, her appearance drew 27 million viewers, making it the most watched Sunday football since the Super Bowl. The viewership among teenage girls has increased by 53%, with two million new female viewers in general for the NFL. Swift's public relationship with Kelce has also increased his jersey sales by 400%, bumping him from

19th most sold to now being in the top 5.

But with the dramatic increases in jersey or the thousands of dollars spent on merely getting to Swift's tours, why does she have such a large impact? As Swift has reinvented herself with each of her different eras for each album since she was sixteen, her discography contains numerous types of music ranging from strict country to folksy pop. Along with the numerous different genres of music, there is a strong appeal to her, considering that she has released music regarding her own experiences since she was very young. Having music about so many different experiences draws in people from

numerous different backgrounds that can all find something within her discography that they feel resonates with them. In even further addition, many fans have seen and grown up with Swift, sharing similar experiences at the same time, which could also contribute to her exceedingly loyal fanbase. Audrey Danz '25, a Taylor Swift fan, also noted how she is a role model for younger girls with saying, “She is not only an empowering singer, but she is able to be a fantastic role model for young girls and teens.” Although Swift is occasionally a very private person, she does share parts of her life that people could really connect to, such as her sexual assault trial in 2017. Danz stated, “This was just one of the times that she shared something very intimate, but many people could relate. It makes her seem like more of a person than just a large pop star. It adds even more appeal to her as people see their own experiences reflected in such a large star.”

With her appeal to people of all ages, music preferences and backgrounds, Swift continues to appeal to anyone that listens to pop music and connects to young girls all over the world. Her large and loyal fanbase makes her one of the most influential people of all time as she continues to leave a lasting impact on the world.

# Exploring the themes of 2023's Fashion Week

By Jessie Ji & Cynthia Li

Managing Editor of Podcasts & Managing Editor of Global

As one of the most prominent showcases in the fashion industry, throughout the year, Fashion Week has taken place worldwide to kick off the style of the year in London, Paris, Milan, New York, Berlin, Madrid, Copenhagen, and Lagos. This annual event is renowned for setting global fashion standards, showcasing the latest designs and brands, and introducing the future of fashion.

With the theme of innovation, diversity, and sustainability, the event itself, as well as the designers, all embraced this through various approaches. Designers se-



Courtesy of Creative Commons

A model wears a dress embroidered with indigenous floral patterns.

lected sustainable materials, and embedded eco-conscious practices into their collections while blending the traditional with the untraditional. From recyclable fabric to zero-waste techniques, the industry has demonstrated a collective effort toward a greener, cleaner, and more sustainable future in fashion. The event also celebrated diversity and inclusivity by showing models from different ethnicities, body shapes, and backgrounds by showcasing them in the designs. This commitment to diversity has challenged the traditional beauty standard, bringing novel ideas to the fashion world. The show also introduced innovative technologies, such as virtual fitting rooms and other digital fashion experiences which redefined the stereotypical style of fashion, showcasing a probable future development direction of the fashion industry.

Despite the debut featuring well-known fashion brands, many designer brands of the younger generation also popped up, and attracted phenomenal attention in the fashion industry. These vibrant new-emerging brands all seem to have something in common: the pride they take in their own culture and the empowerment of fashion as a gateway to present their stories through clothing.

Runways have been a focal point where designers, models, and stage designers work together to showcase their depths not only in clothing but also in cultural representation. We see more fashion designers

of diverse backgrounds, unique upbringing, and distinctive perspectives willing to integrate their experience into their brand concept. During Australian fashion week, a project on Indigenous clothing's mix with modern fashion by Torres Strait and Teagan Cowlshaw was launched. As Cowlshaw said to *Bazaar Magazine*, “Grace is not known for an up and down runway. You're coming for an experience, you're coming for a performance...what she creates on the stage is magic.” In Shanghai,

designer Yue Qiqi possesses the unique qualities of traditional Chinese costumes and contemporary playfulness and boldness of the young generation. In her works ranging from knitwear, highly-crafted dresses, footwear, jewelry, to home decoration (a series of delicate candle collections), the Long (Chinese dragon) motif and traditional Chinese characters have been essential to her storytelling of each piece of work.

It's a progress seeing storytelling on the fashion runways as fashion final-



Courtesy of @voguechina on Instagram

Three models wears trendy, vibrant-colored clothing to shows.

fashion week, there are also numerous young designers proudly showcasing their combination of fashion and traditional culture. Launched in 2019, Yueqi Qi, an empowering, eponymic brand of Chinese

ly becomes a means of free expression: designers of under-representative backgrounds make fashion refreshing to audiences and nostalgic to homelands both ethnographically and historically.



# The perfect fall day: A five part list

By Claire Ireland

Managing Editor of News

It's that feeling when it's early on a Saturday morning, the crisp autumn air brushes every so gently against your skin as the wind blows, and the trees in striking orange and yellow hues begin to sway in response: that perfect fall day feeling. Well, to make it more of a perfect fall day, here are some fundamental fall activities and of course foods to have that quintessential fall experience that you're looking for.

1. Drink some hot apple cider: There are so many apple cider options. While I'll always be partial to a fresh apple cider that you can grab at any grocery store, packet apple cider does the trick too. Simply heat up either water for the packet or microwave your hot apple cider and voila you have a delicious fall treat.

If you really want to up the ante, heat up apple cider on a stove top, add brown sugar and pumpkin spice, top with whipped cream and caramel drizzle. Legitimately heaven in a cup. Also important to

note--you can order that exact drink at Starbucks just ask for a hot caramel apple cider.

2.Go to a pumpkin patch: While the most fall-esque pumpkin patches are in Wisconsin

(you can find many on the side of the highway), there are a couple of great spots nearby. Check out Didier Farms for their pumpkins and other fall treats or the pumpkin patch at St. Gregory's Episcopal church in Deerfield. Pick out your favorite pumpkin or even the ugliest pumpkin you can find. 3. Watch *You've Got Mail*: This might be a biased opinion, but no perfect fall day of mine would be complete without a viewing of *You've Got Mail*. While only part of the movie takes place in fall, its entirety is steeped in the cozy fall vibe, with a constant slew of bookstores and fashionable sweaters.

4. Go on a walk: Truly there is no better time to take a walk than fall, not too cold, not too hot, and you can wear a sweater. Take a peak at neighborhood halloween decorations and simply enjoy the beauty of this fleeting season.



Pumpkins, various gourds, and mums sit in the back of a truck.

Courtesy of @fall.lifestyle on Instagram

## Best Halloween episodes in television

By Ela Jain

Managing Editor of A&E

### *Brooklyn 99* - "Halloween"

One of the things that makes *Brooklyn 99*, an otherwise commonplace procedural cop comedy, so iconic is the Halloween heist. The characters each go toe-to-toe, trying to steal one thing, and creating more and more elaborate set-ups while doing so. By the 8th season, it is a bloodbath. However, the one that started it all was season 1's episode, simply titled, "Halloween." It follows Jake Peralta (Andy Samberg) making the first bet against Captain Holt (Andre Braugher) that he wouldn't be able to steal the Captain's most important thing; his medal of honor. In honor of

classic mysteries, the plan revealed at the end is funny and well thought out.

### *Community* - "Epidemiology"

*Community* is best known for its comical parodies and unhinged episode premises, but "Epidemiology" is one of the best examples of both. Riffing off of stereotypical zombie and horror movies, the episode follows the fictional community college Greendale, as a zombie epidemic slowly sweeping through the college with old military rations being handed out at a Halloween party. As the main five characters race to kill the zombies, they are slowly being bitten, until only one survives. Funny and suspenseful, "Epidemiology" is another episode that proves

just how inventive *Community* is.

### *Bojack Horseman* - "Mr. Peanutbutter's Boos"

*Bojack Horseman* is a Netflix series that follows the titular character and his relationship with drugs, alcohol, fame, and the people around him. However, for the Halloween themed episode, *Bojack Horseman* takes a turn to focus on Mr. Peanutbutter, Bojack's friend and rival. The episode showcases four different Halloweens from Mr. Peanutbutter's perspective, all attending the same house party, but all with a different wife. It's a fascinating character study on someone, that from Bojack's perspective, who has it all together. Mr. Peanutbutter is

a play on the type of person who never seems to grow up, and that toxic trait is reflected in all four marriages, and in all four Halloween parties.

### *Derry Girls* - "Halloween"

*Derry Girls* is a remarkably funny and absurd show, but the episode "Halloween" proves that they can play with emotions - and they can do it well. It follows Clare (Nicola Coughlan) as she gets a date with a ticket seller, and all her friends hijinks as they attempt to get her to the date, a surprisingly difficult task. However, the end of the episode drops an unexpected bomb, and proves that *Derry Girls*, while witty and absurd, can turn everything around in just a second--similar to life.

## How to dress in season: The season of fall

By Esti Rosenblatt

Managing Editor of Production

It's not just the leaves that change when the summer season becomes autumn. Arguably, most importantly, it's our wardrobes. Packing up summer slips and pulling out fall fleeces signifies the start of the most fashionable season. Get ready for Chicago's chilly fall with these uptown punk, trench coats, and textured layers.

This season, there's no need to worry about putting together trendy minimal pieces. What's in, is mismatch. On warmer days, wear a striped rugby shirt and a plaid skirt. Or on colder days pull out your long neglected patterned sweaters from 2020 or your brightest cardigans and craziest tights. If you are, however, into that minimal look, trending basics include soft monochrome sweaters and white blouses. Wear them together, apart, whatever suits you, and of course, prepares you for the cold winds of Lake Forest.



An example of an outfit with riding boots and wool wear.

Layers layers layers! Essential for a substantial fall wardrobe. Trench Coats resurface every fall. But this year look for new colors

and textures. Beige wool is a classic but try yellow leather. For inspiration of mixed fabrics and new colors, look at Miu Miu. Wool

Courtesy of @trendstylr on Instagram

and cotton sweaters and leather jackets- all mustard- have taken over their collection

It is so easy to stick with your summer sambas or white sneakers, but if you're up for it consider changing up your shoe game. Instead of does this fall, what's trending are below the knee boots. In a variety of different colors, mid length boots. Think, "I just finished horseback riding and forgot to change my boots." For inspiration look at saddle strap boots and to tie the outfit together, horsebit belts.

On campus favorites include varsity shirts and army jackets. Students have been showing up in tee-shirts, sweaters and sweat-shirts (¾ dresscode friendly) with numbers on the chest and strips on the arms. Find these at popular stores, or pull them out of your dad's college wardrobe. Army jackets are popular around campus. They protect students on rainy days and the trendy army green compliments any color worn with it.

Get excited for fall and stay warm out there!



# Biden launches the American Climate Corps

By Emma Swanson  
Managing Editor of Social Justice

During President Biden’s first week of office, he delivered an executive order of wanting the government to implement a “civilian climate corps.” His idea of a climate corps stemmed from progressive environmental activist groups, which spread their ideas of the U.S. needing workers equipped to tackle climate change and begin to build a sustainable economy. The corps was also modeled off of an initiative put in place after the Great Depression, designed to give people more work opportunities. While the climate corps will address climate issues and work towards sustainable goals, it will also offer employment opportunities by paying the participants.

On Wednesday, September 15th, the Biden-Harris administration officially launched the American Climate Corps. The official website of the White House states, “The American Climate Corps will mobilize a new, diverse generation of more than 20,000 Americans – putting them to work conserving and restoring our lands and waters, bolstering community resilience, deploying clean energy, implementing energy efficient technologies,



Courtesy of Creative Commons

People are protesting about the current issue on Climate Corps.

and advancing environmental justice.” The corps has different goals within its program, like referenced above. One of them is to provide the next generation with jobs (that do not require prior experience in projects) which will work to reduce storm surges and flooding, protect forests, deliver sufficient energy to reduce energy bills for families, and much more. According to an NPR article covering this topic, “the White House says

that the American Climate Corps is designed to attract participants from disadvantaged communities disproportionately impacted by the changing climate.”

With this, Biden hopes to promote inclusivity within this corps compared to other American Corps implemented throughout history that have been unjust in mainly employing young white males. The federal government is also working to launch a recruitment site where potential

participants can learn about the corps and apply. President Biden is working to implement education awards from completing national service work in order to pay for post-secondary education or lower student debt after joining the corps. So far, California, Maine, Colorado, Michigan, and Washington have already implemented successful in-state climate corps programs. Meanwhile, Arizona, Utah, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Maryland are all in the process.

While the public, especially environmental activist groups, were pleased that the Biden-Harris administration is taking climate action with this new plan, President Biden is still criticized for some of his previous decisions regarding the environmental movement. He faced backlash for his decision in allowing the Willow drilling project in Alaska that would threaten the habitats of already endangered wildlife in that area. However, with this new corps, he is hoping to gain back some of the trust from the public and continue to tackle climate change, which was one of President Biden’s top four priorities he promised when he came into presidency. Seeing action being taken to battle this climate crisis is exciting and begins to implement hope to this issue.

# BTS: Sodexo workers in STU

OCTOBER 2023						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	Fresh Pick Fruit of the Month GRAPES	Fresh Pick Vegetable of the Month BEETS				
		Lunch 	Type here	Peruvian Dish Lunch 	Dinner 	
	Fresh Pick Vegetable BEETS Inspired Recipes Lunch/Dinner	Fresh Pick Fruit GRAPES Inspired Recipes Lunch/Dinner	Big City Flavor Dinner 		Dinner 	
	Fresh Pick Fruit GRAPES Inspired Recipes	Lunch Grill Special 		Breakfast Special 		
	Big City Flavor Lunch 	Halloween Lunch 				

Courtesy of Sodexo

October’s dining events calendar details special meals and holidays.

By Bela Bock  
Managing Editor of Collaborations

Is Stu food unappetizing, or are we just used to it? This has been a topic on everyone’s mind for the past few months as school has started again. Some students enjoy it, while others particularly do not. Sodexo Head of Food Services, Angelica Garcia, clarified how much time Sodexo spends planning, making and cleaning up after each meal. A lot of effort and time goes into planning the meals for each week, but not necessarily from the Stu staff.

Garcia said, “Each week is a menu cycle that we get from our partnership

with Sodexo. We receive the menus and we revise and adapt them based on what students need and want.”

She emphasized how the staff must follow a certain guideline when making the food, which includes all the food groups, in order for each student to have a balanced meal. When asked about how long it takes to prepare and clean up from each meal, she said it takes ten hours the day before and four hours the day of to prepare. However, it takes different amounts of time for cleaning up depending on how much of a mess students leave in Stu. It has been taking longer than expected to clean up because of students leaving

their dishes on the tables. This issue has been around for a while and has ultimately gotten worse. The mess in lower Stu is an example of how it’s gotten worse. She also said, “It puts more stress on us and puts another thing on our plate that we have to fit in.” As Sodexo already has many obligations and things to get done, students should be more conscientious of what they leave behind.”

If you were here last year you may remember the carnival lunch day in Stu. These themed lunch days happen at any time of the school year. Garcia said they do them seasonally, such as the fall theme day. They decide to do these theme days based on students feedback from the dining committee they had done in the past and staff ideas to create a better lunch environment.

New to LFA, Freshman Ami Rosen

said, “Stu food tastes good. It’s much better than my old school; there are a variety of options such as the salad and sandwich bar.” She emphasized how she’s noticed the stress students leaving dishes in Stu has reflected upon Sodexo. LFA students should be thankful for the hard work Sodexo has put in to make meals more enjoyable. This is a privilege to have our own dining staff; we shouldn’t take that for granted.

**Update to story:**

On Friday, October 27th, Assistant Dean of Students Akim Mpofo announced at Morning Meeting that while the whole of Stu has constantly been left messy, the mess left in lower Stu has become inexcusable, and thus the area will be closed off til students can demonstrate their “responsibility” to the community. Lower Stu is well known to be mainly occupied by freshmen.



Photo by Ackim Mpofo

Leftovers remain in the Upper Student Union sitting area.