



Lawrenceville Remembers RBG

EMMA KIM '23
& CLAIRE JIANG '24
& TIFFANY YEUNG '22

This past Monday, September 21, Lawrenceville students and faculty gathered virtually over Zoom to commemorate the life and legacy of former Supreme Court Justice and prominent gender equality advocate Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Ginsburg, who passed away on September 18, was the second female Justice to be appointed to the Supreme Court. During her 27 years as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, she played instrumental roles in landmark legal decisions, including broadening the 14th Amendment to guarantee women equal rights, legalizing same-sex marriage in all 50 states, and enforcing women's abortion rights.

Led by the Student Council, Diversity Council, and Religious Life Council, the VILLEage Vigil for Justice Ginsburg began with a reflection from Rabbi Lauren Levy H'97 '01 P'01 '02 '09. She was followed by thoughts from Perri Kitei '21, Student Council President Soleil Saint-Cyr '21, and Head of School Stephen Murray H'55 '65 '16 P'16 '21, each interposed by a moment of silence. The meeting closed with a virtual candlelit vigil led by Reverend Sue Anne Steffey Morrow H'12.

Levy began by describing Justice Ginsburg as a "tzaddik," or "one that would perpetuate equality and access without the expectation of any fame or praise...[and a] worker of justice." She emphasized the importance of keeping Ginsburg's memory alive and carrying on her legacy, not just by remembering her, but by continuing to pursue her work for justice and equality.

Adding onto the relation between Ginsburg and her Jewish heritage, Kitei spoke about Ginsburg's influence on her, saying, "As a Jewish woman with a lot of opinions and a very strong voice, I have also faced discrimination on the basis of my sex...I have also had to prove I deserve an equal place among my peers."

Following Kitei, Saint-Cyr said, "Justice Ginsburg represented all that I could do, all that I could become, and all that I could challenge and dissent from as a young woman who seeks to help those around her." She described Ginsburg as "one of those remarkable human beings who led that commitment, that charge, to bring us closer to justice."

Murray then discussed the hopefulness and determination the "notorious RBG" had and how she remains a symbol of tenacity, reminding the public of the power of dissent and integrity. Finally, students and faculty held up candles on their phones in solidarity to close the remembrance.

"I felt a strong sense of community at the vigil which felt comforting after losing such an important figure in our country," said Malin Phelan '23. She added that she would "do [her] best to honor [Ginsburg's] legacy and the incredible woman she was."

Murray Addresses the School: "On Truth"

HELEN LIU '22

Last Sunday, community members convened virtually to view Lawrenceville's 211th Convocation ceremony to commence the 2020-2021 academic school year. Following the invocation given by Lawrenceville's Hallelujah! Chaplain, the Reverend Dr. Greg B. Jones, Head of School Stephen Murray H'55 '65 '16 P'16 '21 addressed Lawrenceville in a speech entitled "On Truth."

"Truth," Murray began, "is an ideal we tend toward, though like an asymptote of a curve, will never quite touch."

He explained that while many people believe in a single truth that aligns with their personal beliefs, power exists in multiple narratives. "To see one perspective and not the other is to see through a limited lens one does not negate the other. One is not more true than the other—together they amplify our understanding. One shows what we aspire to, and the other teaches us if we are serious about our aspirations, how far we fall short," said Murray.

Bringing the message closer to home, Murray then described the unique opportunity given to internationally diverse communities such as Lawrenceville: "Here at Lawrenceville we come into contact with an enormous range of individuals—as roommates, as Housemates, as classmates, as



Murray addressed the School on September 13.

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

teammates. And we will get it wrong at times; we will misunderstand each other, and sometimes hurt each other."

Murray believed that "these moments of imperfection are the inevitable result of coming together here on this campus." According to Murray, "We show our strength as a community when we avoid pulling back into retrenched, single-minded factions the moment we stumble. We show our strength when we have the will and resolve to trust, to listen, and to see competing truths."

In light of the recent Black Lives Matter protests nationwide, Murray warned the Lawrenceville community to never become satis-

fied with our current state of matters regardless of how much progress there may be. He emphasized that "what we refer to as knowledge must be under frequent reassessment, refinement, and debate, and when we fall into complacency and fail to challenge the facts routinely, it is at our peril."

Next, Murray reflected on Lawrenceville's recent progress, saying, "I do not believe we have been complacent...That's not to say we don't have important work ahead of us in addressing issues right in our midst...I've learned in recent months just how far we still have to go and how much work I have to do to see a bigger picture, and to see a much more complete truth about

the experiences that so many of our students of color have had here."

Members of the Lawrenceville community already expressed their widely varying opinions on the School's treatment of racial issues to Murray. While he has received many supportive emails, there have been an influx of those who disagree with his actions as well.

Murray concluded his speech with a reminder that, despite the current divide in the School, "We have a choice. We do not have to live divided. We don't simply have an opportunity here. We have an obligation...We cannot be afraid to respect each other and to love each other, and to show the rest of the world how it's done."

Campus Prepares for Fall Term Reopening

PRAACHI CHAKRABORTY '23
& SAHAS CHODHARI '24
& JESSICA LI '23

To ensure a safe reopening during the Covid-19 pandemic, the School has adapted classes, extracurriculars, and social events to integrate necessary health and safety protocols into daily life on campus. Day students and boarders who have not already moved in will return to campus on September 25 and 26 to complete their first round of on-campus testing, and in-person hybrid classes will begin on October 1.

The hybrid-class model will ensure that classrooms do not repeat their typical capacity and that students and teachers will maintain at least six feet of distance. Using 360-degree cameras, students will be able to see everyone participating both on Zoom and on projector screens in the classroom.

According to Dean of Academics David Laws, Ph.D. P'21

'23, "The key to hybrid learning for everybody is to dive in and accept the reality that we have...I do think it's going to be a good experience for us actually having people back in classrooms. It's going to take some time getting used to, but the best thing about our faculty is our adaptiveness and drive, which is really assuring going into this term."

Throughout the term, teachers will determine the rotation of students who are in-person and those who are not on any given day, allowing for flexibility in students' schedules. The administration plans to keep options open to best accommodate all Lawrentians and their circumstances. According to Dean of Students G. Blake Eldridge, Jr. '96 H'12, "We're going to have to wait and take a lot of guidance from the students, because they're the ones who are going to feel what the rhythms are of the day and where they want to invest their free time."

Despite these challenges, faculty and students have come up with

unique events and activities to stay connected during the Fall Term. Even though there will be some minor differences in effect due to Covid-19 regulations, fall sports and House sports will run as usual. In addition, while most clubs will have to hold their first few meetings virtually, the School has set up 19 tents outside for students to use to gather in person in the coming weeks.

Associate Dean of Students Emilie Kosoff H'88 '96 '00 '18 P'19 has been working closely alongside Student Council to organize socially-distant events to connect the community. According to Kosoff, "We obviously don't have the capability to do an all-school dance, but a movie night in The Bowl or on the Crescent Green or on the Circle could be possible. We're working on ways in which we can provide ample opportunities outside of the Houses for the community."

Eldridge agreed, emphasizing

the willingness of the administration to support student interests, saying, "Obviously we're going to be able to support and assist students, and we do have a couple of events that we're already considering, but really we want to be responsive to the needs and the interests and the ideas of the students. It'll be up to the ingenuity and the inventiveness of the students."

Even though these restrictions might seem to conflict with the usual connectedness of the Lawrenceville community, Laws is confident about the upcoming year. "We know these are strange times. We're all gonna have to adapt, but we're all here to do the same thing, which is to learn together, grow together, and experience Lawrenceville in life together...As long as we come in there with that kind of attitude, we'll be able to get through this and really have some good, thoughtful, and meaningful experiences this year," he said.

Reform, Defunding, Abolition: Let's Rebrand the Police

Andrew Boanoh '23 discusses the merits and potential of police reform in the United States.



Welles Grant Spotlight

Sara Xu '22 profiles two Welles Grant recipients, Ariana Codjoe '21 and Arata Fujii '21, about their projects and Covid-19 impacts.



Preview & Prediction: The French Open

As the final Grand Slam of the 2020 season begins, Ndeye Thioubou '21 predicts the winners and losers of the upcoming tournament.





THE LAWRENCE

Class of 1968 Fund in Honor of Edward A. Robbins '68 '69 '71 - Nicholas G. Ifft '44 Fund
- The Princeton Packet Fund (Denise L. and James B. Kilgore '66) - Michael S. Chae '86

Editorial Walk Our Talk

Isabelle Lee
Editor-in-Chief

Eric Morais
Managing Editor

Christine Cheng
News Editor

Angel Zhang
Arts Editor

Joshua Cigoianu
Copy Editor

Ankita Suri
Photo Editor

Jupiter Huang
Lucia Wetherill
Opinions Editors

Alper Canberk
Web Editor

Min Kim
Graphics Editor

Gabriel Gaw
Jack Hallinan
Sports Editors

Avigna Ramachandran
Features Editor

Carina Li
Copy Editor

Grayson Miller
Associate Editor

Faculty Advisors
Mr. David Figueroa-Ortiz P'18 Dr. Marta Napiorkowska P'19

While summer vacation was full of fun and games and provided many with much needed relaxation time, it was also filled with student activism on both racial and political issues in America and at Lawrenceville. Now, with the upcoming election and on-

that we're taught to be tough on ideas, not people.

Devaluing the merit of one's opinions solely based on his or her background and political affiliations is a violation of civil discourse: a Lawrentian's identity should not determine whether his or her point of view has a place at the table. Thus, we as a student body must reverse this worrying trend and begin to walk our community's talk.

A case in point of this imbalance can be seen in discussions about the upcoming general election. It is no secret that our campus mirrors the political polarization of this country. Many of us often give into the mentality that, "because a student is Republican or Democrat, he or she does not have anything valuable to contribute." For example, if a Republican student were to express an opinion on the issue of police brutality, we risk assuming that he or she condones police violence because Republicans have been attacked for doing so. Similarly, we risk assuming that all Democrat students accept violence and looting as a justified response to police brutality because Democrats have been attacked for doing so. By formulating these inferences about others before we listen to their opinions with an open-mind, our criticisms end up attacking their political identity rather than their ideas on an issue. We shift the focus of our discourse from debating policies to scrutinizing each other's political affiliations, thus attacking the people, not their ideas.

The same can be said for our approach to addressing racial injustice: Lawrentians often embrace or reject a

person's opinions based on his or her racial identity. We assume that white students have never experienced injustice. We assume that Latinx or Asian students do not understand America's history of oppression. We assume that black students are only motivated by a sense of grievance and not justice for all. Therefore we risk underappreciating insights that Lawrentians may have because we prejudge what they're going to say.

Although these assumptions sometimes hold true, many of us do enter these conversations emphasizing others' identities, and therefore we deafen ourselves to their ideas.

Now, more than ever, civil discourse

We risk underappreciating insights that Lawrentians may have because we prejudge what they're going to say.

could not only propel our understanding of political, racial, or other social issues at Lawrenceville but also make us a more cohesive community. If we assume that the value of an individual's contribution to a conversation comes from his or her race or ideology rather than its merit, we jeopardize the effectiveness of our discussions. Doing so will only continue to polarize our community and compromise honest efforts to understand one another and achieve equity.

-IL and EM

Devaluing the merit of one's opinions solely based on his or her background and political affiliations is a violation of civil discourse: a Lawrentian's identity should not determine whether his or her point of view has a place at the table.

going Black Lives Matter movement, civil discourse must remain a vital part of our student experience as we transition into the school year, but it is also at risk.

Over the summer, we have seen the collapse of these discussions on social media. The comment sections on students' instagram posts transformed into spaces filled with personal attacks against one another, with many of us criticising others' political and racial identities rather than their ideas. These social media bouts are the antithesis of the School's message on how we must treat our peers in discussions. If there's one lesson for all of us to take away from our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training this fall, it's

CORRECTIONS

Readers who notice errors should contact the Managing Editor at emorais21@lawrenceville.org.

Photo of the Week: Quincy Leung '22



Reform, Defunding, Abolition: Let's Rebrand the Police

Why Reform Is the Most Promising Solution to the Problem of Police Brutality

ANDREW BOANO '23

The death of George Floyd at the hands of officers in Minneapolis, Minnesota, sparked widespread protest and unrest across the country. From coast to coast, shouts rang out demanding change in the treatment of minorities under the American policing system. From these protests, three major schools of thought emerged: defunding, abolishing, and reforming the police. While each of these ideas has some merit, I believe that a simple change in the way American policing operates alone will not substantiate real change. In reality, a change in public perception—a rebranding of your average neighborhood officer—is needed.

As a young black man in America, I fear the ones tasked with keeping me safe. I vividly recall the night that Trayvon Martin's face was plastered all over the news—a face that looked like mine. Learning that Trayvon hadn't been killed by a freak car accident or chronic disease, but by a police officer, created a permanent association in my mind that police officers are bad. When twelve-year-old Tamir Rice was shot in Chicago for playing with a toy gun, the broad stereotype I'd painted over police officers was reinforced. I felt that all cops were monsters, operating with the

sole intent of hurting people like me.

I found myself asking the kids in my predominantly white suburban neighborhood if they shared my sense of apprehension. "No!" they would say, looking confused and almost offended. "Police officers are cool! They stop the bad guys!" I would walk away perplexed, trying to think of some rational reason to admire police officers. The difference between these two ways of thinking is certainly a stark one, and it is indisputable that this is a product of the contentious race relations in the United States.

Reformation is the key to fixing the fundamental problems with policing in America. In essence, policing is based on public trust. It only works as long as officers retain public trust. Take Camden, New Jersey, as an example. As recently as seven years ago, the city was widely considered Ameri-

ca's most dangerous municipality, with crime rates akin to those of Honduras. When increased police presence did nothing to prevent crime, it seemed there was no way out for Camden: that is, until it rebranded

over of sorts. There were changes in training and culture within the police force. To improve public relations, they began hosting community get-togethers and other such events. To regain public trust, rather than wrongfully arresting and excessively sentencing young black teens for minor offenses, they be-

In theory, defunding is a prudent option. However, without significantly increasing public trust in their protectors, these changes would be futile. Similarly, abolition would be rendered ineffective because the sphere of public opinion would most likely not trust the governing force instated in the vacuum following the complete removal of policing.

The police officers in America have lost my trust. There is no way that I can put my faith in a force that actively targets and kills my people. I do not want to see a complete removal of police: this would do nothing but cause chaos. I do not want to see police funding reduced to pocket change: this would do nothing but lessen the efficacy of law enforcement.

Reform and rebranding—a mental switch in the way the department was viewed—is what fixed Camden. I strongly believe that rebranding is the most promising solution. I would certainly feel much safer in my community if I saw a protector whenever I saw an officer, not a murderer. An enforcer of the law, not a faceless villain out to get me just because of the color of my skin.

Until the day that I and my brothers and sisters of all ethnicities, races, creeds, and cultures can look upon the ones sworn to protect and serve our communities with respect, dignity, and admiration, America's policing will remain a problem.



Stephanie Xu '23/THE LAWRENCE

its force. It was this rebranding that ultimately allowed the Camden police to better serve its community.

Between 2013 and 2017, the Camden Police Department underwent a make-

came mentors and father-figures that black men could look to in times of need. Police officers in Camden went from storm-trooper-esque enforcers of systemically racist laws to neighbors who wished to do nothing but keep their fellow Camdenians safe. By reforming internally and working to improve public perception, police were able to transform Camden.

The two other schools of thought, abolition and defunding, are not effective ways of stopping police brutality.

2020: Unprecedented Injustice in America

The Authoritarian Leanings of an Un-American Presidency

DEMOCRACY'S SLIPPERY SLOPE

IAN LEE '24

Over 2500 years ago, Julius Caesar, a man ravenous for power, contributed to the collapse of the world's first representative democracy. Fast forward many millennia, and the President of the United States, Donald Trump, has attempted to postpone Election Day, cripple the USPS in order to suppress mail-in voters, and sow distrust in absentee voting. These actions have shown how far the president is willing to go to undermine American democracy, putting his own power before the American people's lives, freedom, and happiness. Although the president has attacked American democratic values and it seems as if he may turn the country into a dictatorship, the foundational pillars of the government and the love for freedom instilled in Americans make the notion of a descent into authoritarianism unrealistic and fundamentally impossible.

During the nation's birth and infancy, the founding fathers created a system of government that has held up through the trials of time. Although the nascent government was far from perfect, aspects like the bicameral legislature and system of checks and balances propelled America as an advocate for freedom and

equality. The government is designed so that no one holds excessive power, no matter how much a president possessing Caesarean intents tries. Even though Trump seems to be amassing remarkable authority, with his Republican backing holding a

majority senate and the potential of appointing a ninth justice to create the most conservative the Supreme Court in 70 years, America is still a constitutional democracy by design, with an extreme emphasis on limited federal power to prevent monarchical leanings. On September 12, Trump told supporters that he would "negotiate" a third presidential term because he is "entitled" to it based on the treatment he has received. What should be ironic, but sadly is not, is that Trump is unaware that (though Franklin Delano Roosevelt managed to get elected for a fourth term in 1944) the 22nd amendment, adopted by Congress in 1947, officially restricts

the maximum number of presidential terms to just two. A vote of the masses will get one in power, but the government's inner cogs and wheels will spit them

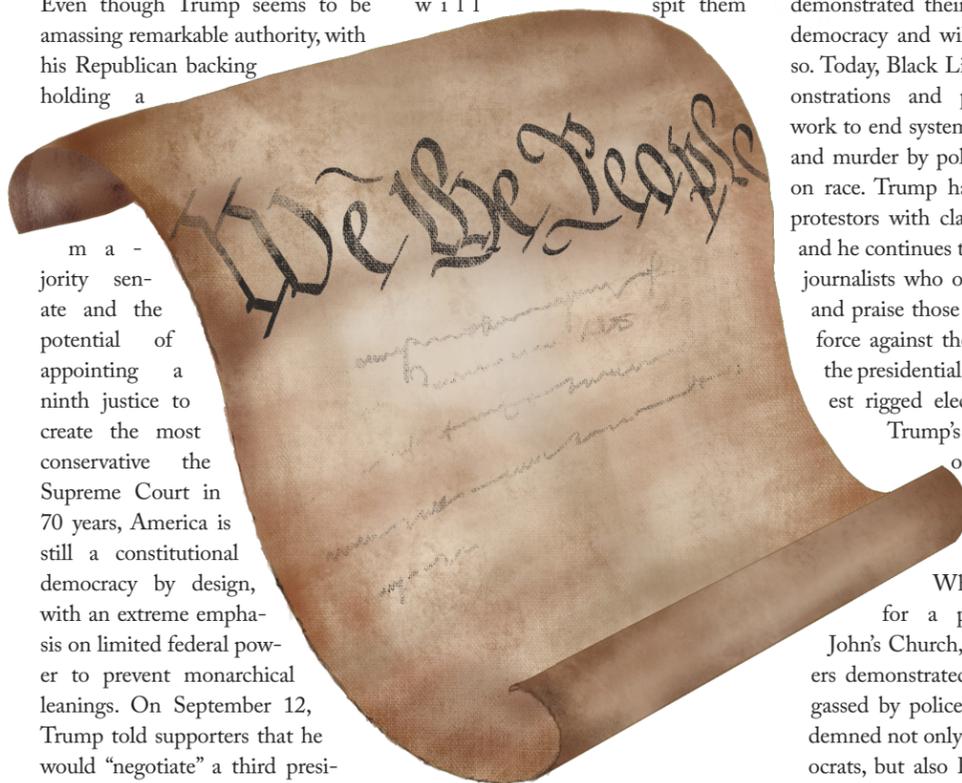
will arise from every angle. From minutemen to the Boston Tea Party, from Women's Suffrage to the Civil Rights Movement, Americans have demonstrated their commitment to democracy and will continue to do so. Today, Black Lives Matter demonstrations and peaceful protests work to end systemic racial injustice and murder by police officers based on race. Trump has attacked some protestors with claims of terrorism, and he continues to lash out against journalists who oppose his actions and praise those who use physical force against them. He describes the presidential poll as "the greatest rigged election in history".

Trump's actions have not only proven un-presidential, but also highly provocative.

When Trump went for a photo-op at St. John's Church, peaceful protesters demonstrated, only to be tear gassed by police in a fiasco condemned not only by leading Democrats, but also Republicans, such as James Mattis, the former Secretary of Defense, who slammed him for his "abuse of executive authority" and "making a mockery of the U.S. Constitution" through his "militant" efforts to divide the nation. His ridiculous claims were expected, though, as a coalition of former governors, Cabinet members, and law-

yers known as the Transition Integrity Project, have simulated scenarios in which Trump refuses to leave office since early summer and are confident of the legal avenues available for a transition of power, graceful or not. To be elected as president requires the legal recognition of all members of government itself, and even if Trump refuses to vacate his position, the rest of the nation will be poised to move on. If the president ever succeeds in chipping away at the pillars of a democratic government and lounging on the throne of America, it is certain that resistance from the American public, as well as seated public servants, will prevail.

America was designed by founders who aspired to bring unprecedented freedoms to a nation of uniquely liberty-focused peoples, but at the moment our president intends to breach this long-adored core principle. When the leadership of this country trips, it is up to the people to set it right. President Trump has been attacking American democratic values in order to prolong his time basking in fame and power, but eventually either the rest of the government or the people themselves will react and prevent further slippage towards an authoritarian regime. This government derives its power from the trust of the people, and if Trump continues to escalate his power-grabbing intent, he will only lose his right to wield the power of American democracy.



Min Kim '21 & Ria Patel '23/THE LAWRENCE

out if they wish to play dictator. If Trump attempts to establish an authoritarian regime through refusing to vacate his position after an election defeat, or using and consolidating power that the president should not hold, resistance

Replacing Ruth: Two Wrongs Don't Make A Right

LOSS OF A LEGEND

RIA McDONALD '21

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death has cut viciously through the fog of destruction, pain, and chaos that has shrouded this year. She was a leader, a force, a giant at 5'1", and her loss is a wound to America that will not heal easily. That is why it's so keenly heart-breaking that, in response to the death of a figure whose mission was fairness and equality, the major political parties of this country have once again abandoned those values, letting the destructive beast of partisanship rear its twisted head.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG), in every aspect of her life, stood for justice. As a groundbreaking lawyer, she helped overturn centuries of biased precedent, and by committing herself to the Supreme Court, she dedicated her life to re-examining the law and holding the country to its sacred values. RBG, in her lifelong crusade for equal rights, understood that feminism is equalism. In her vaunted career as a lawyer—during which she herself overcame hurdle after sexist hurdle—she fought for women and men alike who were denied rights on the basis of sex because she knew that the injustices of our society affect everyone. Furthermore, from her seat on the solid ideological left of the Supreme Court, she befriended conservative justices who opposed her entire legal perspective: RBG and the late Justice Antonin Scalia forged a famous friendship, bonding over love of opera, and maintained a close re-

lationship despite bitter disagreement over landmark cases, including *Bush v. Gore* (concerning the 2000 election) and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (concerning the legalization of gay marriage). Despite their fundamental opposition, Ginsburg treated Scalia with complete respect, acknowledging his humanity beyond the bench rather than reducing him to a collection of deplorable verdicts.

The Supreme Court seat that RBG has vacated, however, has unfortunately allowed the Democrats and Republicans to engage in blatant partisanship in order to further their respective agendas. In February 2016, during the last year of the Obama presidency, Justice Antonin Scalia passed away. The Republican-majority Senate, led by Mitch McConnell and Chuck Grassley, denied a confirmation hearing to President Obama's nominee, Judge Merrick Garland, on the basis that a president in their last year of office should not have the ability to make a lifetime appointment. In a Washington Post op-ed written by these senators in 2016, they argued that the voters should be allowed to have input on who fills the seat, with their ballots for president representing their opinion. Now, however, Senator McConnell is backtracking on his position of not confirming a justice during an election year and justifying this new stance by saying that the Senate and White House

are controlled by the same party. Democrats who criticized McConnell and his followers for the 2016 decision, which they perceived to be purely motivated by partisanship, now argue that a Trump nominee for justice should not be considered. It is equally wrong for politicians on the left and the right to

adopt these new circumstantial positions, yet here they are, clashing over RBG's newly-empty seat just days after her death. Both parties have abandoned positions they professed to believe solely based on their opinion of the current president and perception of who his nominee may be. It's absurd and unholy for democratic decisions to be so tainted by political inclinations when they should be approached with foresight and judiciousness.

That being said, the country needs a nominee, in order to safeguard the future of this democracy. The argument put forward originally by Republican politicians in 2016 was absolute partisan nonsense. The president has the right and duty to nominate justices for the Supreme Court, and the Senate should respect that right. The people have elected the president, and during the president's rightful term (Trump has not yet been and may not be voted out of office), it is their job to fulfill all necessities that should arise—the possibility of the defeat in an upcoming election cannot be grounds to deny the president the power afforded to them. There is danger in arbitrarily limiting the power of the presidency. Furthermore, America is on the eve of an election unlike any in the modern era. The legitimacy of

the upcoming election has already been questioned, and in the scenario that the election does result in a Supreme Court battle, it would be dangerous for the decision of the court to be seen as illegitimate as well. It is not nearly as important who wins this election as it is for everyone to agree on who that winner is. While it may seem biased that Trump would be nominating a justice who he knows may decide whether he stays in office, the importance of having a full court takes precedence over fears of partiality.

Throughout the last few years, I have, like many Americans, obsessed over every update regarding RBG's health, shaking at each hospitalization and panicking at each bout of cancer, as I hoped against hope that she would live forever... or at least until a new administration had begun. As an anti-originalist myself, I have wished for her to be replaced by someone with a progressive view on the Constitution. As a small-d democrat, I have longed for someone who believes, as she did, in the sanctity of every American's voice in an election. As a woman, I have feared for the future of my reproductive liberty. All of these concerns have come rushing back in the wake of RBG's death, and I am truly worried about the judicial future of the country. However, I worry more about the future of our democracy, which is eroded, little by little, with each partisan stance and senseless division. Ruth Bader Ginsburg's memory can never be erased—yet we must let her seat be filled so the country can tend to its wounds and perhaps—perhaps—emerge a more perfect union.



Min Kim '21/THE LAWRENCE

16 Lawrentians become National Merit Semi-Finalists

KYLE PARK '23

V Formers Jacqueline Chen, Christine Cheng, Jupiter Huang, Shepard Jiang, Mak Kalwachwala, Ashley Lee, Steven Leung, Katie Li, Kristen Li, Alex Liang, Hamza Mian, Rana Myneni, Tuntai Tumpunyawat, Chelsea Wang, Michael Yu, and Ryan Zhang qualified as National Merit Semifinalists in the 66th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These students will now be competing for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$30 million that will be offered in the spring.

The process begins with students achieving scores in the top one percent of their state on the PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test). Approximately 16,000 out of 50,000 students are recognized as National Merit Semifinalists each year.

To become a finalist, students must then submit a scholarship application consisting of a list of extracurriculars, awards, honors, and an essay to be evaluated by the College Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Semifinalists also have to submit recommendation letters, their school transcript, and SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or ACT (American College Testing) scores. All applicants are notified in February regarding finalist selections;

approximately 15,000 of the 16,000 semifinalists advance to the Finalist level.

Of the 15,000 finalists, around 8,000 students receive Merit Scholarship Awards. Finalists in each state with the strongest combination of academic accomplishment, passion, and potential for success in rigorous college studies are awarded \$2500 scholarships. These scholars are carefully selected by a committee of college admissions officers and high school counselors who assess the Finalists' applications.

For Wang, though she entered the test with little to no preparation, the PSAT was "nothing new" as she had taken the SAT a few months prior to the National Merit qualifying test. She found that studying "pretty thoroughly for the SAT in the summer leading up to [her] test," which involved taking multiple mock tests, turned out to be "immensely helpful, as the PSAT is just an easier version of the SAT."

Myneni had a similar test preparation experience, as he had taken the ACT before. To familiarize himself with the upcoming qualifying test, Myneni took a few practice tests. Since the PSAT serves merely as a practice for the SAT, Myneni believed that "the whole point was not to study and invest too much time into preparation."

The scholarship winners from the Finalists' applications will be announced between April and July of 2021.

II Form Orientation Goes Virtual!

ARATA FUJII '21

This past Tuesday through Thursday from 4PM to 5 PM, the II Form attended virtual orientation led by the Ropes Course Instructors (RCIs). While orientation typically takes place on the Joshua L. Miner Ropes Course ("The Josh"), this year the group

ate different animals and objects using eight different triangles, squares, and parallelograms.

On working together with his group, Kevin Morrow '24 said, "Our group was supposed to make a sailboat, but it was really hard because our communication was really off and we didn't actually finish. However, over the

"I really enjoyed the last day because it felt like a real challenge—the activities got harder and harder over the days, so it was interesting to work together through all the challenges."

Reflecting on the whole event, Foster said, "We were definitely nervous going in. This situation was so novel that even returning



II Form students participated in orientation.

Arata Fujii '21/THE LAWRENCE

of 20 RCIs were tasked with creating a virtual orientation experience. Over the summer, V Former Head RCIs Harrison Abromavage, Owen Donayre, Caroline Foster, and Arata Fujii planned various activities, carefully picking out and designing games that nurture team spirit and communication skills.

On the first day, II Formers were given various icebreaker activities to create meaningful connections with one another, such as learning each others' names, hometowns, favorite hobbies, and sports. The next day's theme focused on communication, and II Formers had to complete tangram puzzles together to cre-

ate different animals and objects using eight different triangles, squares, and parallelograms.

next few days our communication definitely got better as we started learning from our mistakes." The third day allowed II Formers to focus on problem solving. Students were asked to create five identical arrowhead shapes by cutting out shapes of different sizes. This seemingly impossible task encouraged them to think outside of the box and communicate their methods with one another clearly. On the last day, the II Formers focused on Harkness. Each participant was given a clue to solve a mystery, and they all had to work together and provide their own perspective and clue to retrieve the answer.

Andrew Howard '24 reflected,

RCIs weren't returning [in person], but in the end we came out more connected than ever. Everyone learned new skills, especially Zoom navigation, and I think that we were able to offer a great orientation."

Soleil Saint-Cyr '21 agreed, "Obviously this year was different...One of the best things about the ropes course is the physical connections you can have with your group. Because a lot of the things we do are very interactive, we really had to navigate through the lack of physical connection online, but overall, we did the best job that we could do as RCIs with the limitations that we were given."

Zooming in to Big Red Club Night Series!

RICHARD ZHOU '22

This past Tuesday through Thursday from 7:30 PM to 8:00 PM, Lawrenceville hosted its first three virtual club nights, with affinity group clubs presenting on Tuesday, philanthropic clubs presenting on Wednesday, and academic and environmental clubs presenting on Thursday. Club leaders first met with Director of Student Clubs Cara Hyson P'14 '16 and Inter-library Loan and Outreach Assistant Ian August on Monday night to debrief and prepare for the series of virtual Club Nights. During the Club Nights, each club leader had the chance to give a 30 second pitch about their club.

On the challenges of setting up virtual Club Nights, Hyson said, "We had to coordinate everything...when you have over 200 club leaders and about 150 clubs and you have to add something or if something's incorrect, it's very time consuming to make changes." Overall, Hyson was happy with the way things went. "All the students spoke with enthusiasm and interest, and the



Club leaders met on Monday night to prepare for the upcoming club nights.

Ankita Suri '21/THE LAWRENCE

virtual substitutes were successful," she said.

Compared to previous Club Nights, Co-President of the Caribbean Students Association Courtney Abbot '21 noted that while Monday's virtual Club Webinar "lacked

the buzz of energy when everyone's gathered together in the field house, it was the next best thing considering [Covid-19]."

Beads for Bags club Co-President Jessica Fernandez '22 also noted the challenge

of attendance for virtual club nights: "It was difficult to accommodate students who are interested but unable to make it to the Club Nights, so it was harder to reach out and find interested students."

While students who are

used to going to the in-person Club Nights might have originally doubted this new format, Manoc Joa-Griffith '22 was surprised at how club leaders were able to remain creative despite limitations. "I was worried how an event as large and interactive as Club Night could be shifted into a virtual webinar, but after attending, I felt like I didn't miss out on anything," he said.

As clubs begin to plan meetings for the fall, Fernandez also spoke on the challenges of leading a club virtually. "Before, a lot of our fundraising proceeds that go to the Beads for Bags project would come from Parents Weekend and other big events. Now, we need to shift our thinking into considering how we can adjust to members who might not be able to come to campus," she said.

To finish off the Club Night series, current events, political, and business clubs will present next Tuesday night; publications clubs will present next Thursday night; and the performing arts, sports, and games clubs will present on Friday.

Welles Grants Spotlight: Ariana Codjoe '21 & Arata Fujii '21

From creating booklets to teaching Harkness, two Lawrentians provided resources to students in the Bronx, NY and Tokyo, Japan, despite new challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

SARA XU '22



Ariana Codjoe '21. Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

Ariana Codjoe '21

For her Welles Grant project, Ariana Codjoe '21 planned on teaching learning strategies to low-income children who struggle academically or have learning disabilities. Recalling her own academic experiences growing up, Codjoe said, "It was unfair that because I had the financial means to support myself in different sorts of learning experiences, I could have an [academic] advantage." She realized that an uneven playing field exists in the world of education, specifically for students whose parents are unfamiliar with the U.S. education system, noting that it is difficult to know "how to access different opportunities in this country unless one has been in this country." She planned to visit schools in the Bronx, NY, to help implement these study strategies with students in early middle school and provide extra academic support through one-on-one sessions. The Covid-19 pandemic posed strong

obstacles for Codjoe, as she was no longer able to work with the children in person. This change took an effect on her project, as she decided not to gear her strategies solely towards students with learning disabilities. Codjoe said, "Without being in person, it's hard to destigmatize learning disabilities. I didn't want the students to shy away from [the resources] in order to avoid having a learning disability label on them." She originally planned to talk to specialists to gain a better understanding of learning disabilities and conduct sessions in a private, comfortable setting, where the student did not feel explicitly targeted for their disorder. Unfortunately, the pandemic interfered with her ability to forge these personal connections, but Codjoe still found an alternative way to provide students guidance.

As a substitute for in-person instruction, Codjoe created booklets, which were made accessible to a more general group of students. Considering that many classes are now being held remotely, she included strategies in her booklets that were specifically focused on online learning. She provided tips on retaining attention, working effectively in a potentially disruptive environment, and practicing active learning in more independent settings. Codjoe planned to send these booklets along with a package that contained physical tools, such as extra paper and writing utensils, that would help improve the students' learning experience at home. She is now working on translating her booklets into Spanish, providing parents the opportunity to be more involved in their children's schoolwork. Reflecting on her project, she said, "I feel really satisfied. My only concern is that it's definitely going to be a two-person effort—you have to be somebody who is willing to look at the resources." Despite the lack of in-person contact, Codjoe successfully turned her obstacles into opportunities, one booklet at a time.



Arata Fujii '21. Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

Arata Fujii '21

"Imagine a world where SATs are the only things that matter for college admission," Arata Fujii '21 said when describing what the education system in Japan is like. There is a single college entrance exam—no grades, no extracurriculars—that decides where students can go to college, and as a result, students care less about school and more about their afternoon "cram schools," which are specifically designed to help them ace the entrance exam.

As someone who has experienced this type of learning system prior to high school, Fujii was surprised when he arrived at Lawrenceville and saw the Harkness style of teaching in action. In Japan, classes were primarily taught in the form of lectures and students adopted an exam-based mindset at a very young age. Inspired to challenge this traditional mindset, Fujii decided to bring Harkness to his hometown by pursuing a Welles Grant. "Being at Lawrenceville and

being Japanese, I wanted to do something that was unique to my experience and only I could do. That, for me, was bringing Harkness to Japan."

He originally planned to organize in-person workshops with teachers from different schools, but due to Covid-19 and schools closing, Fujii could not follow through with his plans. Without the physical aspect, he faced many of the challenges Lawrenceville faculty and students were presented with in the spring when trying to implement Harkness remotely. For him, the question became: "How do we strip down to those essential aspects [of Harkness] and push for discussion-based learning, whether [classes are] online or not?"

Fujii decided to shift his focus to the students, especially because they had more time on their hands when school was cancelled. He still worked with teachers remotely but added a new element to his project: teaching other students in Japan how to engage in Harkness and ultimately be comfortable with facilitating discussions on their own. Fujii capitalized on his experiences as a Ropes Course Instructor (RCI) and used RCI activities to encourage students to communicate with each other. He found that they initially struggled to voice their ideas, but "once they got into it, they actually had fun and wanted to do it again, because it was such a unique experience."

While he intended to share the Harkness method with teachers, his project unexpectedly shifted to a more student-driven initiative. These students are now able to spread Harkness values from a social standpoint, while teachers can help enforce these values at schools by proposing policy changes. Currently, Fujii is expanding his organization, Harkness to Japan, to include more institutions. By building a robust network of schools to explore the Harkness teaching method through his initiative, Fujii aims to challenge the traditional norms currently engrained in the Japanese education system.

A New Face in Pop Rotunda: Dean Holifield on his DEI Plans

SABRINA YEUNG '22 &
TIFFANY YEUNG '22

By now, most students are familiar with Dean of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement Rick Holifield, but what students may not know is that before pursuing a career in education, he played professional baseball for 10 years with the Toronto Blue Jays and several other organizations, after being drafted in his senior year of high school.

Following his retirement from professional baseball, Holifield embarked on his journey in private school education, starting as a baseball coach at The Brunswick Academy in Greenwich, Connecticut and pioneering the school's first diversity initiative. Three years later, Holifield became the Dean of Student Life and Director of Multicultural Affairs at St. Luke's School as well as the Commissioner for Diversity at the Connecticut Association of Independent Schools. He then relocated to Atlanta, Georgia, where he served as the Chair of the Atlanta Area Association of Independent Schools (AAAIS) and the Director of Diversity at Pace Academy. In addition, he was the only independent school representative on the advisory board for the National Center for Civil and Human Rights. Four years later, Holifield became the Assistant Head of Community Life at The Walker School and chaired the committee when the People of Color Conference (PoCC) was held in Atlanta.

While Holifield initially applied to be Head of School at two different institutions, he became interested in the Dean of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement position at Lawrenceville after attending the PoCC in Seattle. When speaking with an administrator from Lawrenceville, he was posed the



Dean of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement Rick Holifield. Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

following question: "Are you interested in being the leader in this work [among] independent schools...so that we could ultimately become the 'beacon on the hill'?" Holifield recognized that Lawrenceville was not "looking to do diversity work for diversity work's sake, but rather, to be leaders in this industry." This desire to make real, substantial change, coupled with Lawrenceville's reputation, ultimately influenced Holifield's decision to apply for and accept the offer for his current position.

While his official start date was scheduled for July 1, Holifield's work began much earlier than planned due to the cases of police brutality and nationwide protests that took place this past spring. In addition, the "blackatlanceville" Instagram account and members of the Lawrenceville Black Alumni Association (LBAA) brought several instances of racism to light, which Holifield

felt were important to address immediately.

Beyond acknowledgement, though, he wanted to take immediate action to prevent injustices, particularly racism, from perpetuating on campus. When he stepped into his role, three action plans had already been presented to the School: one 60-point anti-racism plan from the LBAA, another presented by two members of the Board of Trustees, and one proposed to the Board of Trustees by Lawrenceville's 2019-2020 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force. In order to consolidate the three proposals, Holifield created a 10-point plan titled "DEI Vision for Diversity Plan," which outlines past, current, and short term future action items. The plan also includes details for ongoing work such as enhancing the School's diversity webpage, developing a task force on classroom language, and adding three new members to the Office of Multicultural

Affairs: Religion and Philosophy Teacher Dr. Nuri Friedlander, Assistant Strength and Conditioning Coach Kelly Wise, and Associate Director of College Counseling Beth Foulk.

Reflecting on the past few months, Holifield believes that the School—and the nation as a whole—is currently navigating two different pandemics: COVID-19 and the pandemic of racial and social unrest. "The truth is, we cannot pretend like the things we learned through blackatlanceville did not exist. In my estimation, that is a pandemic that we have to deal with," he said.

After hearing several accounts of racism and injustice at Lawrenceville, Holifield's main goal is to ensure that every community member feels safe and secure on campus. While tackling these issues have presented several challenges, Holifield believes that perspective is important and prefers to consider the following: "What opportunities have we had, and what opportunities lie before us?" To him, one such opportunity is regaining the trust of some Lawrenceville community members, who may be currently operating at a "trust deficit." While safety is his main priority, Holifield also aims to foster a culture in which black, brown, and marginalized students are "beyond surviving, but thriving."

According to Holifield, "It's not good enough to do the work—it's important [that] we make it meaningful...There are competencies that we expect a Lawrenceville graduate to have, and I would like to see DEI skills added to that competency upon receiving a Lawrenceville diploma. That's my long term goal." On that note, he hopes that through DEI work, Lawrentians will graduate with not only the technical skills learned in the classroom but also the adaptive skills needed to be leaders in the world.

Capturing 2020: A Time Capsule of Our Community

Lawrentians spent the last week of Spring 2020 reflecting upon their experiences during such a tumultuous time. Here is a selection of works from The Lawrenceville Community Project: Bearing Witness to Spring 2020



TRISTAN YU '22



CAROLINE STEIB '22



SYDNEY MCCORMACK '21

Lie

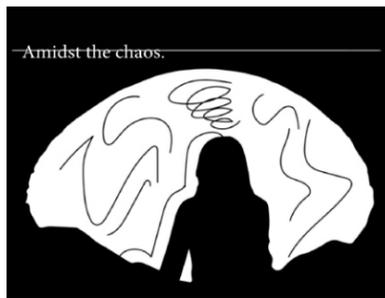
LAUREN KIM '22

I'm not black, so I'll never understand
How to live day by day —
Loving. Fearing. Trusting. Running.
Only to die at the law's pale hand.

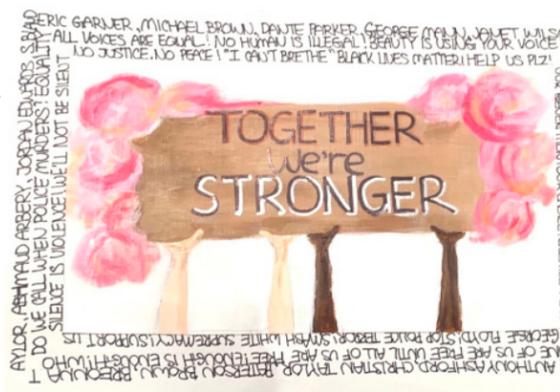
But I'm sixteen and I know
What it's like to be lied to.

Stars fall from the sky, I call out the name.
No ocean or rain can drown out the fire,
A city in pieces. Engulfed in our flame,
Falling into eternity, now who's a liar?

Arriving at the world's end,
Our waves soon leave the sand.
The green light flashes back to red.
And I'll never understand.



QUINCY LEUNG '22



MEAGAN MA '22



SALLY LEE '23

Tenet: Christopher Nolan Delivers a Good, Not Great Film

MAC DILATUSH '21

Christopher Nolan has long been a proponent of the movie theater experience. He even penned a *Washington Post* op-ed arguing that movie theaters are “a vital part of American social life.” It’s fitting, then, that the fate of the movie theater business, at least for the near future, rides on his much-anticipated summer blockbuster, *Tenet*. If it succeeds in the box office, more movies will roll out in theaters. If not, expect to see more of the straight-to-streaming stunt pulled by Disney with *Mulan* and *Artemis Fowl*, dealing serious damage to theaters’ finances. The jury’s still out on how it will fare—all signs from the first two weeks point to horrible—but that’s more a reflection on how serious Covid-19 is and less about *Tenet*’s quality: very good, but not great.

People are excited about *Tenet* for a reason. You might have heard of this Christopher Nolan guy—he’s a pretty big deal, having directed major hits like *Dunkirk*, *The Dark Knight*, and the mind-boggling *Interstellar*. Hell, he even made *Time Magazine*’s 100 Most Influential People list in 2015. So it figures that both fans and occasional viewers have pegged it as this year’s “can’t miss” movie. For the most part, *Tenet* warrants the hype. It’s an enter-

taining, sleek espionage thriller with extra weird time-travel thrown in for good measure. People drive cars and shoot guns in reverse. Think James Bond on acid.

The filmography and special effects are consistently incredible; few movies can replicate the visual pleasure derived from watching someone traveling forwards through time fight someone traveling backwards. Even the simpler things bring visual gratification; watching cars and liquid and bullets and trees move in reverse is uniquely fascinating and, coupled with the phenomenal camerawork, stunning.

Playing an American special agent identified only as “The Protagonist,” John David Washington is electric as the lead. He possesses the kind of easy cool that permeates his every action, allowing him to weave a robust capacity for humor around all the guns while still remaining distinctly suave. Without his knack, the movie would sorely miss any comedic relief. Washington’s standout performance hits all the right notes. In *Tenet*, he proves what his earlier excellence in other films always hinted at: He’s capable of carrying a blockbuster by himself. The rest of the performances are good, but short of Washington’s caliber. Robert Pattinson, playing another classy special agent/physicist/time-travel-expert named Neil, acquits himself well with a solid per-

formance and a remarkable head of tousled hair. The same goes for Kenneth Branagh of *Hamlet* fame, now a terminally ill arms dealer plotting to destroy the world with help from the future. Elizabeth Debicki’s turn as the frightened wife of an illegal arms dealer who holds her child hostage reveals that Nolan watched Amazon’s fabulous mini-series *The Night Manager*. Debicki’s role is virtually lifted from the series, where she plays a character in literally the same situation but under a different name; nevertheless, she remains a very good actress in *Tenet*.

It’s not all great, though. The blockbuster’s weak point lies in the plot, which suffers from overwritten stipulations about time travel and lack of clarity or eventual payoff. The movie makes half-hearted attempts to explain everything, but seems to admit that even the writers don’t really understand it all when Neil offers The Protagonist, standing in for the audience, a bunch of half-baked explanations about time travel that boil down to “Look, I don’t know either, let me sleep.” Subsequently, the audience, bogged down by mild confusion or nagging questions about plot holes and unresolved paradoxes, struggles to settle into the story and sympathize with the characters.

That over-the-top complexity restricts *Tenet* from joining Nolan’s pantheon of great movies. The plot-



A French movie poster for *Tenet*.

Courtesy of Nolanfans.com

twists prevent the kind of soberingly quotidian violence and philosophical edge found in *Dunkirk*. The action scenes are better than *The Dark Knight*’s, but amidst all the confusion *Tenet* can’t find the emotional keys that made the Batman movie so gripping. It’s more cerebral than *Interstellar*, but where the latter delivers one final “Oh!” of satisfaction, the new thriller dissolves into scattered little “what?”s and “ok”s. It’s just a tad too much

like that one classmate who uses big words without comprehending their meaning; so intent on seeming smart it ends up looking a bit dumb. This isn’t to say *Tenet* is a bad movie, or even a mediocre one. It’s a viscerally sublime watch and one of the rare long movies that doesn’t drag from bloat. As always, Nolan delivers a good film. Only this time, it’s shy of great.

Verdict: 7.5/10

Who Will Win in Paris? French Open Preview

NDEYE THIOUBOU '21

For over five months, professional tennis completely shut down due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Major tournaments including Indian Wells Masters, Madrid Open, and Wimbledon, a Grand Slam tournament, had no choice but to cancel. However, in August, tournaments began returning, and through strict protocols that excluded fans from attending, the US Open successfully took place. Usually, the French Open, known officially as the Roland-Garros, is the second Grand Slam of the year, but now it will be the third and final Slam, making it particularly important in the writing of 2020's legacy in tennis. The clay court tournament will begin in Paris September 27 and end October 11. Although some big names will be missing, including 2020 US Open champion Naomi Osaka, Ashleigh Barty, Bianca Andreescu, and Roger Federer, the tournament remains packed with talent.

On the men's side, the favorite will remain the same man who has dominated the tournament for over a decade: Rafael Nadal, who will be the second seed at the tournament. De-



Thiem lifts the US Open trophy after a five-set duel with Alexander Zverev.

Courtesy of CNN

spite his loss to Diego Schwartzman in Rome at the Italian Open, beating Nadal in Paris in the best-of-five sets format is almost an impossible task, given his superb historical performance on clay courts with his wicked forehand topspin. Dominic Thiem will present the most formidable challenge to Nadal, as he has made the Roland Garros final the past two years and just captured his first Major title win at the US Open. Thiem operates with assassin-like precision on the court, and whereas many players crumble in long points, Thiem grinded down Alexander

Zverev in the US Open final by lengthening the rally, particularly useful against taller players with big serves. Novak Djokovic has also consistently gone deep in this tournament (winning in 2016), so expect to see him in the semifinals. His aggressive baseline play with flat and powerful shots make it difficult for any player to match him shot-for-shot. The most intriguing dark horse pick, though, is undeniably Casper Ruud. The 21-year-old Norwegian has reached a career high ranking of 30 in the world and has won his first career Association of Tennis Pro-

fessionals (ATP) Tour title in 2020, propelled by his fluid movement and strong defensive tennis.

The depth in talent in the women's game means that there are many contenders for the title. 2018 champion Simona Halep has a strong chance to win her third Major title, as she has looked impressively comfortable on clay. She already won the WTA Prague Open in August and just added the Italian Open to the trophy cabinet. Serena Williams has lifted the title in Paris three times and will continue her quest for her 24th Major. Williams has all the tools to win, with her outstanding serve and high-power forehands, but she turns 39 on September 26, so time is running out. With three top-ten overall players absent, this year's French Open offers her a chance. Among other veterans, a few weeks ago, 2020 US Open Finalist Victoria Azarenka would not have been even considered as a contender, but her impressive run of form in the Western & Southern Open and US Open has made her a threat.

Not all top players are pegged to go deep at Roland-Garros, though. For one, the 2020 Australian Open

champion Sofia Kenin, who was "double bagged" by Azarenka in Rome (losing 6-0, 6-0) and has not played on top form as of late, in part due to the high number of unforced errors she has been making, recording 22 against Azarenka, compared to Azarenka's four. Amanda Anisimova will enter with more positivity, though, after making the semifinals last year at just 17 years old, defeating Halep along the way. Her deep backhand and flat, versatile forehand have become her best assets, although she has not excelled on clay so far this year, losing in the second round in Rome and the first round in Strasbourg.

With notable absences, the tournament being played in September instead of June, and qualifying players testing positive for Covid-19, the 2020 French Open will be unlike any of the editions preceding it. Given the unpredictability of the US Open, which gave us an expected Thiem-Zverev final and Azarenka's poetic resurgence, will the French Open provide a first-time Major winner, or will the old favorites Nadal and Halep take over after sitting out for the US Open?

Week 3 Fantasy Football Pickups

HAWKINS SUTTER '22

Headlines about the onslaught of major injuries have dominated the post-Week 2 chatter in the National Football League (NFL), but there's no need to worry for your fantasy football team. Even if one of your star players left this past week's game hurt, there are plenty of players you can sign now to improve your team. Here are four players that have a strong chance at giving your roster a boost.

Mike Davis, RB, Carolina Panthers

With many starting running backs going down this week, it's hard to choose which backup to target, but Davis's starting status for Week 3 sets him apart, as he is likely to take the vast majority of the Panthers' carries. He also has been a points per reception (PPR) machine so far, catching 8 passes for 74 yards in Week 2. He's a bit of a mystery at this point in the season because he has not received many carries thus far, but Davis's upcoming workload makes him worth the risk.

Robby Anderson, WR, Carolina Panthers

The second Panther on this list, Robby Anderson might be the NFL's biggest surprise up to this point. Although he went undrafted in many leagues, Anderson has had two consecutive games with over 100 yards and caught a touchdown in the Panthers' first game against the Las Vegas Raiders. His usage is only going to increase with Christian McCaffery's injury, so expect improved numbers from him. Although the Panthers will play the Chargers' strong pass defense

in Week 3, he is a must-start for this week unless you already possess an elite receiving core.

Jordan Reed, TE, San Francisco 49ers

Reed had an astounding game on Sunday, leading his team with seven receptions, 50 yards, and two touchdowns, beginning a potential comeback season as he looks

become a shared system with Kittle, forming a tight end duo that could cause trouble for many defenses.

Gardner Minshew, QB, Jacksonville Jaguars

It would be an understatement to say that Gardner Minshew has simply performed well so far. He has thrown 6 touchdowns and passed for 512 yards over the first two games of the season. After being considered a "bottom of the barrel" team heading into this year, the "Jags," led by Minshew, have shocked everyone by winning their matchup against the Colts in Week 1 and almost stealing a close one against the Tennessee Titans, one of last season's American Football Conference (AFC) finalists. Minshew has been gifted a deep receiving core including D.J. Chark, Chris Conley, Keelan Cole, and Laviska Shenault Jr., and he's playing like a veteran quarterback in only his second season. Additionally, the Jaguars will play a series of bad defenses over the next 4 weeks (the Miami Dolphins, Cincinnati Bengals, Houston Texans, and the Detroit Lions), so now is definitely the time to hop on the Minshew Mania train.

These four players are secure picks to make an impact on your fantasy team if you're struggling to fill a hole in your roster, so if you spot them on your league's waiver-wire or the trade block, don't hesitate to pull the trigger.

The Bubble Asterisk?

ETHAN MARKEL '21

The National Basketball Association's (NBA) and National Hockey League's (NHL) decision to finish their seasons in the bubble format thrilled sports fans after four long months without any sporting events. As the NBA players arrived in Orlando and NHL players arrived in Edmonton and Toronto, many knew that the coming weeks would present unprecedented challenges. Considering the deviations from the regular proceedings and the lack of live fans, some people have claimed that this year's NHL and NBA champions should be recorded with an asterisk to separate them from the champions of the past who won under normal playoff conditions, marking their achievement as lesser, a fluke, even. However, rather than an asterisk discrediting this year's champions, it should be an exclamation point signifying the added mental fortitude and intensity required to win the NBA Championship and Stanley Cup in 2020.

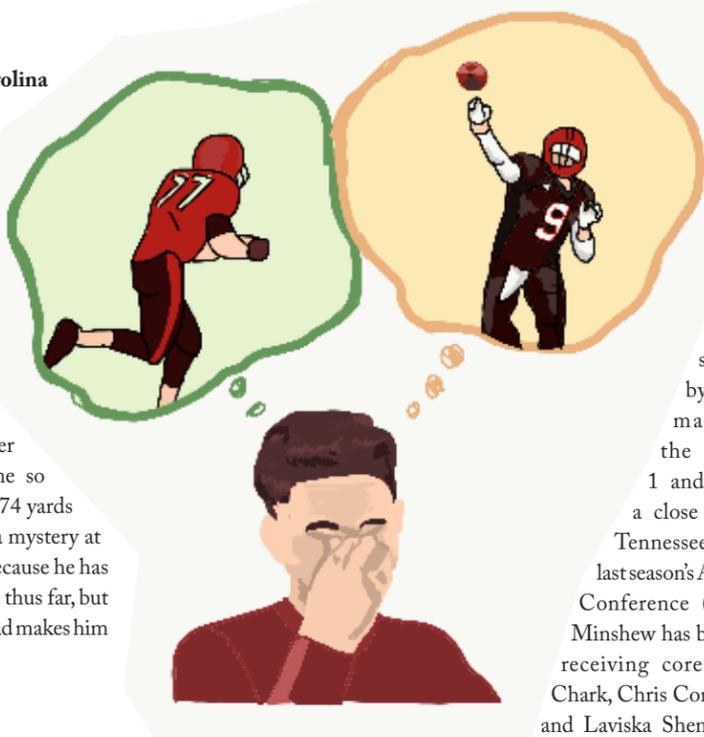
The mental strain that these athletes face playing in their leagues' bubbles is immense. Especially for older players who have families, performing in a high pressure situation can be particularly difficult. Boston Bruins' goaltender Tuukka Rask left his team and the NHL bubble in Toronto prior to game three against the Carolina Hurricanes in the first round, telling his team and the media that he simply needed to be with his family due to an emergency he felt compelled to return for. While Rask's action was highly publicized and criticized due to his prominence as the Bruins' starting goaltender, his views on the challenges of being in a bubble are shared by others in the league and among NBA players, as voiced by Jaylen Brown. The Boston Celtics' small forward said that fans should not be fooled by "the images of

pool tables and swimming pools and all this other stuff," and that "it's tough being [in the bubble]. Being away from my family. Being isolated from the rest of our society." Performing at the highest level, all while maintaining a positive mental health in an isolated environment demands players focus themselves amid an uneasy situation.

The lack of fans in the bubble also presents a formidable challenge to these players. In a media interview following his announcement to leave his team, Rask said, "It doesn't really feel like playoff hockey out there. There are no fans, so it's kind of like an exhibition game... [normally,] the fans are cheering for and against you, it really creates a buzz for the series." While professional athletes like to pride themselves on their ability to tune out distractions from the fans, many are missing

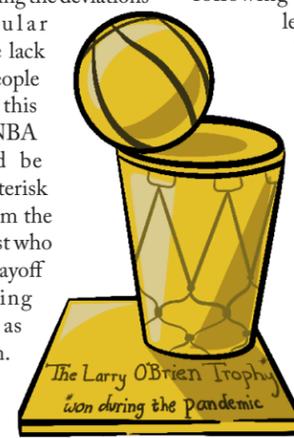
the added motivation of a vibrant atmosphere. Even though the NBA and NHL pump crowd noise and music through the loudspeakers in the arena between whistles and when a goal is scored or shot is made, it is hardly the same as having avid fans physically present.

On top of the competitive intensity players normally face in the playoffs, the restrictions on physical movement and social isolation of the bubble format makes competing day after day all the more challenging for these athletes, as they cannot go about the game day routines that they have practiced for multiple seasons. This year's Stanley Cup Champion in the NHL and NBA Champion do not deserve to have their titles caveated just because these playoffs are a different, somehow "less valid" format than they were prior to Covid-19. If anything, these championship teams deserve additional praise for stepping up their game in such unprecedented circumstances.



Graphics Editor Min Kim '21/THE LAWRENCE

to produce similar numbers to his pre-injury prime. Some may look at his performance from last week and dismiss it as a fluke since the 49ers' usual starter George Kittle was out, but it's rare for a player to make that sizable of an impact and then regress to a lesser role within the offense. Expect Reed to be a solid backup for your team or a fringe starter at a position with shallow depth even when Kittle returns. His floor may be low, but his ceiling could



Ria Patel '23/THE LAWRENCE

UFC 253: Previewing The Return to Fight Island

ANDREW LEE '22

In what should have been a packed VyStar Veterans Memorial Arena on May 9, President of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) Dana White followed through with his plan to revive his company when he held UFC 249 with no fans in attendance. The kicks felt more tangible than ever, each punch to the face felt all the more gut-wrenching, and the clear strategic call-outs brought out an often hidden side of fighting. Amidst the lockdowns, quarantine, and isolation of the coronavirus pandemic, this was the light at the end of the tunnel for martial arts fans.

After bouncing around from Jacksonville to Las Vegas to Abu Dhabi and back to Las Vegas, Dana White and the UFC are heading back to Fight Island, where all events will be held on a popular island in Abu Dhabi called Yas Island. The promotion will hold five events, starting off with UFC 253, a top-heavy pay per view event taking place, this Saturday, September 20 featuring two championship fights at two weight classes: middleweight and light heavyweight.

When relatively unknown light heavyweight contender Dominick Reyes went up against defending champion Jon Jones, who is widely regarded as the greatest mixed martial artist of all time, Reyes shocked fans



Pictured above: In order of left to right Adesanya, Costa, Reyes, Blachowicz.

Courtesy of mmafighting.com

with his energetic movement and precise striking. While Jones sneaked out with a split-decision victory, fans immediately called for a rematch as they had at last found a worthy opponent for the light heavyweight championship.

So when Jones announced in August that he would relinquish his belt in search for heavyweight gold, the UFC swiftly made a co-main event bout at UFC 253 for Reyes and his opponent Jan Blachowicz for the vacant light heavyweight title. Reyes is the projected favorite due to his showing against Jones, but Blachowicz should not be overlooked. The former Konfrontacja Sztuk Walki (KSW) promotion's Light Heavyweight Champion has had 34 mixed martial art (MMA) fights

compared to Reyes's 13. In the UFC, he's garnered attention for knockouts against the top contenders of his division by catching his opponents off guard with explosive punches. However, Blachowicz's striking works best against stagnant and heavier fighters, which Reyes certainly is not. Reyes can swiftly enter Blachowicz's range, strike, and evade without getting touched. On the other hand, if Blachowicz tries to enter Reyes's range, Reyes has shown he can laterally avoid power punches and counter with a left-straight of his own. Though Reyes does not have nearly the same amount of fighting experience that Blachowicz has, Reyes does have the experience of going toe-to-toe against Jones, a match which many considered a victory for Reyes.

Based on the styles of the two fighters, Dominick Reyes looks to be the new light heavyweight Champion at UFC 253.

For the main event, champion Israel "The Last Stylebender" Adesanya faces off against Paulo Costa in a grudge match for the Middleweight Championship. Over the past year, Adesanya and Costa have been hurling insults and online jabs at each other, and their contentious interview on SportsCenter has garnered millions of views online.

In addition to their mutual bitterness, the two fighters are nearly exact opposites. Adesanya's skinny frame is built for technical striking: He is almost exclusively a counter puncher, regularly backing up, timing his shots, and making his opponents pay for

their miscalculated aggression. His poor showing last March was solely due to the fact that his opponent, Yoel Romero refused to initiate offense. On the other hand, Costa utilizes his muscular frame to push for his trademark power punches. The one similarity they share is their undefeated MMA records, as Adesanya and Costa have gone 19 fights and 13 fights without losing respectively. However, what Adesanya's record does not show is the illustrious kickboxing career he had, going 75-5 as a professional kickboxer, and for a technique-based fighter like Adesanya, that experience adds up to championship material; there isn't a punch, fighter, or style that Adesanya hasn't seen. Adesanya will likely retain his middleweight belt.

Though the rest of the card doesn't hold top-name fighters, much anticipation awaits for the co-main event and the main event. Interestingly enough, in one bout, Reyes is favored to win despite his lack of experience, whereas in the other fight, Adesanya has the upper hand because of his experience. The sport of unarmed fighting naturally favors technique and precision over power and brute strength, something both fighters share in common. UFC 253 will be a display of pure championship-level technicality, and the UFC will be riding their wave of success amidst the pandemic.

Why Americans Don't Watch Cycling

CONAN CHEN '24

The Tour de France ended this past Sunday with Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia taking home the win after a historic upset performance on Stage 20. The 21-year-old came from one minute down to beat main rival and compatriot Primoz Roglic, who led the race for the past two weeks. Despite being one of the closest tours in history, with main contenders separated by only half a minute for most of the race, the race only attracted 400,000 viewers per stage in the US. Meanwhile, significantly smaller countries like Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium had ratings near 1-2 million viewers per day. Even in Denmark, a country whose population is less than 2 percent of the US's, attracted twice as many fans. So why don't Americans enjoy watching cycling?

Low cycling viewership in America is heavily rooted in the US's dominant car culture. The life of the average American revolves around the car, with 64 percent of Americans saying that they drive every day, while only 2.3 percent bike daily. Furthermore, American infrastructure caters around the use of cars: safe bike

lanes and wide shoulders are rare sights, and a high number of crashes and bike fatalities discourage people from riding. In Europe however, biking is an integral part of daily life. An EU survey found that 36 percent of Dutch people commute by bike, and in Copenhagen, the Danish capital city, this number reaches 62 percent. Safe, separated infrastructure in European cities also allows people of all ages to cycle without fear of riding alongside distracted or irresponsible drivers, encouraging more to commute on bikes. While the integration of cycling into daily European life allows people to develop a better connection to cycling, the lack of a preexisting relationship in American makes it hard for commercial interest to grow. Since only a small percentage of Americans take cycling seriously, professional cycling viewership in the US has stayed low, and will continue to do so until cycling becomes a part of American culture.

America's lack of connection with cycling is further exacerbated by the nature of the sport. Watching the pro peloton for the first time is incredibly confusing and uninteresting. Understanding racing

requires knowledge about the time system, classifications, rider names and team names, the use of domestiques, and much more. Even after learning the rules, watching cycling is just plain boring. In the first half of a race, most contenders will stay in the back, saving their energy for the final few miles and relying on teammates to shelter them from wind and pass them food. Winning attacks will only happen in the final 20 kilometers, or in flat sprint days, the last 500 meters. There is no incentive for a title competitor to reach his maximum performance until certain mountain stages, so most stages lack any importance or changes in standings. This means that cycling requires immense patience to watch, which is something American viewers don't want. Sports like basketball and football outcompete road racing, as they saturate fans with immediate gratification.

Cycling needs to make many improvements if it wants to attract more fans, and while bike paths can't be built overnight, modifications can be made to the race format. An easy solution would be to shorten stages, forcing riders to up their pace and be more aggressive due to the

fewer opportunities they have to attack. For example, the shortest day of the 2018 Tour de France, stage 17, was one of the most exhilarating races of the year. The shorter race gave way to a flurry of attacks from big names like Julian Alaphillipe, Nairo Quintana, and Tom Dumoulin right from the start, allowing viewers to witness plenty of overtakes and more visible strategic moves. The stage also finished in just over two and a half hours, making it about the time of an average NBA

game. Shorter stages encourage attacking and generate more instant gratification, appealing to new viewers of the sport.

Cycling can certainly become more popular in the US if adequate changes are made to the current race format. But without considerate infrastructure and cycling culture embedded in the heart of their cities, Americans won't be replacing football on Sundays with road racing anytime soon.

Min Kim '21/THE LAWRENCE



140 Board Picks

	Eric Morais Managing Editor	Grayson Miller Associates Editor	Min Kim Graphics Editor	Alper Canberk Web Editor	Jupiter Huang Co-Opinions Editor	Gabe Gaw Co-Sports Editor
						
Favorite thing to do after class?	Among Us with the boys	Resolve to evolve	Have an existential crisis from Science & Lit	Setting HGI on fire	Leftover takeout straight into microwave	Being sad and lonely while reading existential Science & Lit passages
What have you missed most about the Lawrence?	The 'pote feeds	(Forced) Board bonding	Sending emails to a bunch of people. just satisfying	What am I supposed to miss? Our virtual board meetings from the spring?	The office not happening	Two chipotle bowls without paying
HGI or Lville?	Cleve - We're just built different	HGI duh	HGI has too many floors to climb	HGI microwaves	King sized bed	Sharing bathrooms