

the liberator

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Swishes DO COME TRUE Girls Basketball Makes History

VICTOR MARTINEZ | staff writer

At its inception in 2021, the girls' basketball program had only 23 players. This season, the program grew to its largest size since 2021, to the point where the program was able to create a new junior varsity (JV) team. With the unprecedented growth, new challenges and demands have come up for the team, but also, according to player Francia Sarrat, a bigger, stronger, and even more cohesive group of athletes.

Vincent Cruz is the head coach of the LASA girls basketball team. While this is his first year as head coach, Cruz has been a softball coach for the past four years and a football coach for three. Due to his experience, Cruz can testify to just how incredible the increase in team turnout this year has been. "Overall, program size has definitely improved," Cruz said. "If I am not mistaken, last year there was only a varsity team which was, at its largest, 10 players, and I think I'm being generous in that number. This year I am proud to say we have a JV team of 15 players, and a varsity team of 10 players strong."

graphic by photo by Kayla Le

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WHAT A STEAL As the scoreboard ticks up, sophomore Taylor Edgerton sweeps in to swipe the ball from another player. LBJ High School was the team's first opponent following the statewide freeze. photo by Kayla Le



ON THE DEFENSE To keep the score level, freshman Carly Gonzalez fights to keep the ball during a game against LBJ High School. photo by Kayla Le



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what's news



photo by Kayla Le

Student life editor steps up to the plate and tries her hand at softball
see **RAPTOR RUNDOWN** page 16



photo by JC Ramirez

Diversity council throws culture fest with guest speakers and fun activities
see **CULTURE FEST** pages 8-9

AUSTIN VENUES SPEAK

Journeys

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photo by Kayla Le

BIOTECH ACROSS THE GLOBE

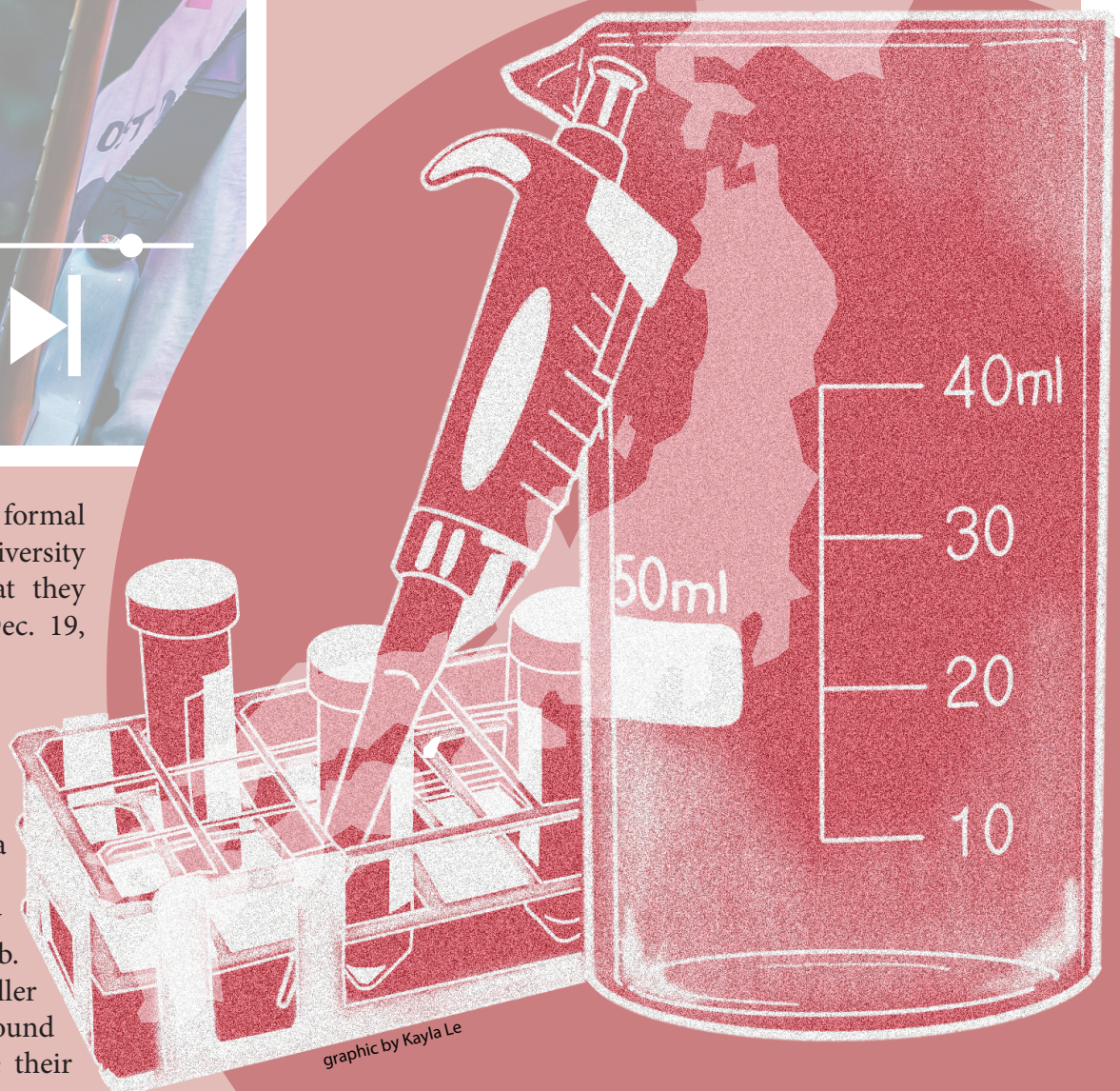
WINTRY RICE | staff writer

Led by Biotechnology teacher Joseph Oleniczak, LASA's biotechnology program includes hands-on learning, in which students conduct experiments in labs. In these labs, students can create glow-in-the-dark cells, sequence the DNA of insects they find, and look for mutations in their own DNA. Biotech is a popular class at LASA, with many students competing to take the class.

Students in Biotechnology I engage in introductory training for using biotechnology lab equipment and techniques, and explore DNA technologies, protein technologies, ethics, and applications. Second-year Biotechnology

students are able to participate in formal internships supervised by a university or industry mentor to apply what they learned in Biotechnology I. On Dec. 19, 2022, a group of students from Biotechnology II worked on a proposal on drug testing that was accepted by a research program in Japan. The six seniors behind the proposal, Jay Campanell, Richa Kalari, Gabriel Keller, Amelise Morrison, Sophie Sun, and Zachary Suri, will be traveling to Tokyo on Feb. 24th to complete the project. Keller described how he and Campanell found out about the opportunity to have their project funded.

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graphic by Kayla Le