

WELCOMING LASA'S FUTURE TODAY

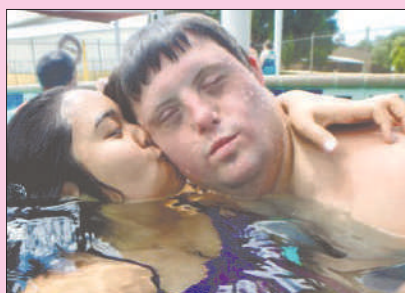


Principal Stacia Crescenzi speaks to minority seventh-grade students, who visited LASA in April to shadow current upperclassmen. photo by Kye Fisher

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STUDENTS ARE [CAMP] COUNSELORS

At Camp CAMP, senior Madeline Lee bonds with disabled children while working as a counselor. photo courtesy of Madeline Lee



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A SPRING IN THEIR STEP

Junior Ulan Notzon takes the stage with the First Ladies in the Dance Spring Show in April, alongside the dance class and other groups. photo by Meena Anderson

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the liberator

Liberal Arts and Science Academy High School

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ON THE MOVE

LASA's relocation has been approved by the district, but plans to leave LBJ may stall out amid ongoing controversy

CLARA MORSE
News Editor

It's official: the prospect of a LASA move was approved by the Austin Independent School District (AISD) Board of Trustees on April 3. The 6-2-1 vote permits the LASA move to proceed to bond planning, the next step to the relocation actually occurring, as well as providing official district approval of the move in concept. Even the concept of the move has proven controversial, however, with many LASA parents, community members and prospective parents facing down some East Austinites, equity activists and LBJ Science Academy (SA) alumni in and out of board meetings. Despite the vote, the move isn't a sure thing yet, and with a still-undecided destination for LASA and a tight AISD budget, the waters around the move seem very murky indeed.

The prospect of a LASA relocation off the LBJ campus to a more central site is not new. It's been discussed for over a decade, and was at one point the primary plan for the two schools following their official split in 2007. However, the present iteration of the movement to move began two years ago when development of AISD's facility master plan began. The plan spans 20+ years, 130 facilities, and (it was hoped) several bonds to pay for all the planned improvements. LASA's relocation was originally tapped for the first bond, meaning a move could occur in as little as five years. However, the hefty price tag of renovating or building a new high school, estimated to be over \$100 million, has led recent bond planning efforts in the direction of phasing— packaging land preparation on the first bond, academic facilities on the second and so on— to create more realistic overall bond prices.

While the logistics remain complex, the principles behind the move are still highly controversial. LASA parent and Campus Advisory Council co-chair Ann Phipps said that a move would aid both LASA and LBJ.

"If LBJ is ever to be able to grow and thrive and serve as the kind of terrific neighborhood high school that AISD has several of, it needs bubble room," Phipps said. "LASA, similarly, in order to grow and thrive, needs to be a place where students come to do what they do at LASA, and have the facilities in order to make that happen."

The LASA and LBJ Campus Advisory Councils (CAC) have both passed resolutions in favor of a LASA relocation to a more central area. Phipps said that a move would provide both LASA and LBJ with increased freedom—for LASA it would increase accessibility to students from around the city and reduce lengthy commute times, and up capacity by 500 students. LASA has been pressed for space and forced to utilize numerous portables and

increase class sizes at its current location, and increased independent physical space could allow better facilities and offer more students opportunities to use them.

"LASA could be more centrally located and have more students from across the district," Phipps said. "Certainly we would have purpose-built facilities for things our students want to do and can't accomplish. But just as important, the LBJ students would have room to take advantage of the state grant for advanced healthcare studies that they have, and would likely have room for additional services on campus."

Phipps said a physical split could also aid LBJ. The early college high school has plans for a health science academy program involving turning part of the campus into a fully functioning medical clinic. The first phase of construction on this project begins this summer, and LASA Principal Stacia Crescenzi said a LASA move may be needed for LBJ to fully implement this program, as extra space is needed to construct a clinic in. Therefore, Crescenzi said a move would permit both schools increased freedom and resources.



graphic by Kye Fisher

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Track sets the record straight

ELENA HUMPHREYS LUCAS
Staff Writer

LBJ Varsity Track have set new records in the high school track community. One of the students that runs varsity track is LASA junior Hannah Porter, who runs short distance. On April 30,



From left to right, sophomore Rachel Horowitz, junior Hannah Porter, freshman Daylyn Gilbert and junior Sarah Porter celebrate winning first at track regionals. photo courtesy of Hannah Porter

Porter competed in the 400 meter dash and won first place as well as setting a new record. Porter ran a 400 meter dash in 56.11 seconds which is now the new record for the fastest 400 meter dash in the region.

"Our girls team won second in the district and in the area. If we had girls in field events we would've won first," Porter said, "At regionals, our 4x100 and 4x200 teams won first because we have the fastest times so far. Our 4x100 and 4x200 teams definitely did some damage at state."

The girls 4x100 placed fourth and the 4x200 LBJ track team placed third at state after they placed first in regionals. Sophomore Rachel Horowitz ran alongside Porter during state. Porter and Horowitz both said they are excited to see what is in store for the track team next year.

"I love running and competing, but most of all I love my coaches and teammates on the team," Horowitz said. "I love track because of the

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Robotics takes on the World[s]

GEORGE GUCKENBERGER
Staff Writer

LASA Robotics headed to the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Championship competition presented by Qualcomm Incorporated in Houston to compete April 19-22. After barely failing to qualify for Worlds at the previous event, the team was happily surprised to learn that they won the Chairman's award at Brazos Valley, which allowed them to go to Worlds. They won this because of their presentation, outreach and spread of the FIRST program while promoting STEM, which aligns with the goal of FIRST of inspiring and spreading interest in technology and science. The Chairman's award is the highest award that FIRST offers. They attended the Houston branch of the competition, instead of St. Louis where they competed in previous years, because there were multiple Worlds locations this year. LASA senior and robot teleoperator Jessica Gitre felt like all the team's hard work was validated by this accomplishment. She also explained that the team dedicates a large amount of time to preparing for competitions.

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On the radar: Radio Club is far from amateur

SOPHIE WYSOCKI
Staff Writer

LASA's Amateur Radio club claimed first place in the high school division this February in School Club Roundup, an amateur radio competition open internationally. During the competition, The LASA Amateur Radio Club contacted 863 people in one week, the highest amount of contacts of any high school involved. This competition is sponsored by the National Association for Amateur Radio (ARRL) and can be entered by amateur school radio clubs around the world. The media and public relations manager at ARRL, Sean Kutzko, said that the work that the LASA Amateur Radio Club, also known as K5LBJ, has done is amazing. While working at the ARRL, he said he's admired much of the work from the LASA Amateur Radio Club. He attributed much of the success of the club to Ronny Risinger, the club's sponsor.

"A lot of credit goes to Ronny Risinger, the

trustee of the station," Kutzko said. "He works hard to make the station available to any student who wants to learn more about radio and electronics."

As an amateur radio enthusiast and the club's sponsor, Government teacher Ronny Risinger enjoys teaching students how to use amateur radio and how to work with radio equipment. According to Risinger, the Amateur Radio Club gives students the tools to open their worldview and experiment with new technology since most don't get the opportunity to try amateur radio.

"I think [seeing students take an interest in something new] is probably one of the more rewarding things, as well as experimenting by building circuits," Risinger said. "A lot of students never do hands-on building something themselves using components like transistors

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Senior Kyla Hayworth makes contacts at K5LBJ, the LASA Amateur Radio Club, while senior Reed Hanson records her contacts. The club made a total of 863 contacts over the course of one week while competing in the School Club Roundup. photo courtesy of Ronny Risinger

Liberal Arts and Science Academy

the liberator

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Editorial Policy

Responsibilities of a Free Student Press: Serving the primary communication link within the Liberal Arts and Science Academy and between the school and the local community, this newspaper accepts the responsibilities inherent in being a free press. *The Liberator* staff strives to produce a professional-quality publication that follows the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists. The objective is to print the news in a fair and objective way with the utmost regard for integrity.

Editorial Content:

1. The students on *The Liberator* staff will print articles which have been researched to the best of their ability to obtain most complete information.
2. The information will be presented in an objective, truthful and fair manner.
3. When personal commentary is given it will be in good taste on issues that have been researched, analyzed and where expert opinion has been sought, and then presented with the best ability of the writer. In addition, all opinion or commentary will be clearly labeled as so.
4. No material which is obscene, libelous or that will cause an immaterial and substantial disruption of the school day, according to accepted legal definitions, will be printed.

The Editorial Boards and its Functions:

The Liberator staff will be governed by an editorial board comprised of the following individuals: editors-in-chief and section editors.

The Editorial board will:

1. Determine the content of the publication (with input from other staff members).
2. Stress the editorial policy.
3. Ensure the accuracy of the publication.
4. Address disciplinary or other inappropriate behavior of staff.
5. Vote on removal of staff members.
6. Change or add policy as necessary with three of four board members voting favorably.

Viewpoints:

Printed material which is a view of a staff member or a contributing writer will be labeled as such. These views are not intended to reflect the view of the administration of Liberal Arts and Science Academy nor the School Board of the Austin Independent School District. Viewpoints will be given in two areas in the newspaper.

Editorials: These will be determined by the staff consensus. The editorial will be unsigned and will represent the viewpoint of the publication.

Letters to the Editor: Letters to the Editor are accepted for topics of general interest to the readership of the newspaper. Letters must be submitted typed or neatly printed in ink and must have the signature of the writer and the writer's grade level. Editors reserve the right to determine which issue the letter goes in, with every effort made to print the letter as soon as possible. The editors also reserve the right to edit the letter for grammar, length and repetition.

Non-Staff Contributors: Bylined contributions are welcome.

Correction of Errors: The staff makes every effort to print accurate information. In the case of errors, a written correction will be made in the following issue of the newspaper.

Sources:

In general, no anonymous sources will be used in reporting. Sources from within the school, as well as those not connected with the school, will be used. Under no circumstances will gifts, including coupons, etc., be accepted by the staff members from sources or advertisers.

Note: *The Liberator* is an open forum.

Correction: In the previous Feb. 10 issue, LASA Latino Outreach Co-Chair Ms. Torres was misidentified. Her first name is Yolanda, not Elisabeth.

Special thanks this issue to all of our graduating seniors! We will miss you and wish you all the best in the future.

[Water] you up to today? Student identifies waterbottle stereotypes of LASA



ELENA VENEGONI
Staff Writer

We tote them around day to day. The water bottles of LASA are tucked into backpacks, held in our hands, or forgotten in our first period classes. There are many models and styles, each of which says something about the character of the owner. The range falls from being an avid fantasy football player to running a photography instagram account and everything in between. If you've always wondered "What does my water bottle say about me?", look no further than the paragraphs below. Here I will describe the top five most common water bottles I see in the halls and their connotations.



If you carry a water bottle plastered with stickers, you are probably the type of person who loves to talk about the various artsy vacations and experiences you've had. Please know in advance that I do not want to hear about the time you backpacked through Colorado, or spent a week surfing Niagara falls, or saw sasquatch on your sasquatch-tracking trip in Canada. Trust me, I already know plenty about these vacations from the artsy pictures you posted on your, photography instagram account that somehow has managed to get 3,000 followers. Nice choice of filter by the way, Mayfair always seems to make your photos pop.



I guess not everyone cares about the environment. It's okay (no it's not), I'm sure someone else will solve global warming. I definitely won't hold you accountable for the deaths of polar bear cubs and the starvation of seals due to their populations not being kept in check. I'm sure the water in your plastic water bottle keeps you cool as global temperatures increase. You can also use the plastic from the water bottles to make a raft to protect yourself as the sea levels continue rising 3.4 millimeters each year. No hard feelings, but how about you throw these bad boys in the recycling bin and invest \$10 in a reusable water bottle.



If you carry this type of water bottle you are probably obsessed with sports and spend all of your free time talking about and playing sports. How is your fantasy football team going? Did Michael Jackson block that free kick jump? I know you've got a lot riding on this season, namely the \$10 you and your friends pooled for your fantasy football tournament. Keep on rocking it, you can use your \$40 in winnings to buy a popping new jersey. If my analysis is correct then the only clothes you own are jerseys. You most likely have three or four that you wear on a rotation throughout the week. Maybe if you are feeling especially sophisticated you'll slip on some Nike Elites to match.



These "swell" water bottles aren't the only thing that is swollen. If you own this type of water bottle odds are you shelled out some cash. You think you're pretty cool from all of the basic activities? I bet it was hard deciding which pair of birkenstocks to put on this morning. Maybe you can DIY decorate it to match your lululemon leggings which you can wear to Juiceland. I've seen enough of your swell water bottle from the pictures you took on your rose gold iphone 7. Keep up building your instagram followers base, maybe someday you'll get that contract.



If you own this style of water bottle, odds are your mom bought it for you when you were 12 and you never bothered to replace it. Not only does this make you look lazy, but it also makes you look like you lack some shopping creativity. I bet your trip to the mall this weekend was fun, it's always a blast to go shopping with mom. Here's some unsolicited advice: get a new water bottle.

Student steps up to bat, fights for her chance to play baseball and advocates for equality in sports



ELENA HUMPHREYS LUCAS
Staff Writer

Growing up in a household full of brothers and a neighborhood full of boys, I found myself feeling more comfortable hanging out with the opposite gender. I enjoyed wrestling around, building forts made from sticks and rocks in the creek, and despite the fight to take away gender stereotypes, it was difficult to find a girl my age who enjoyed doing the same things. Although I had friends and best friends who were girls, my first real best friend, the first one that stuck with me through and through, was a guy.

Now that I'm strolling through high school, I find myself running further and further away from that kid that built three story forts with her best friend and bathed in the mud at the creek. I was always so used to being that kid who was the only girl playing basketball with the guys at school, or being the only girl at the rock climbing camp. There was a certain feeling of belonging, a sensation, that I got from being accepted as one of the "guys".

At the beginning of the school soccer season, I decided that I wanted to try playing softball next year. Softball seemed like a fun, chill sport, but also has its exciting moments. It hit me that although softball is a great sport, it was created so that

girls wouldn't play baseball. So my teammates encouraged me to play baseball. Besides the main theme of the two games being the same, the two sports are surprisingly different from one another. Despite these differences though, AISD views softball as the girls 'equivalent' to baseball.

When I rushed nervously to ask one of the baseball coaches if I were able to play baseball next year, he treated me seriously and respectfully. I approached him with a nervous smile and a heart that hammered at my chest. Yet when I left him, I had an even bigger smile and a heart that hammered with excitement. He explained that he would be more than happy to have me on the team if AISD would allow it. If it ever comes to the issue that the athletics department at AISD does not grant me permission to play baseball, I'd like to believe that I will be brave enough to stand up for my rights as a student and as a female.

However, when I tell others that I want to play baseball next year, I don't get as satisfying of a response that the coach gave me. All the others try to explain to me how it's a "boys sport", as if I've never breathed one breath

a society. But in fact, it's not 'boys baseball' it's just baseball. My gender should have nothing to do with my eager to play a sport that not even the professional league (Major League Baseball) says the sport is exclusively for boys.

Over the past decade, female high school students all over the country have pushed to play baseball for their high school teams. By getting a chance to be a part of this movement, I am hoping to prove to my friends, my school, my country, and hopefully one day, my daughter, that sports have no gender. For me, playing baseball is just my own way to rediscover the person I once was and maybe, just maybe, I'll be able to find that feeling that made me feel like I belonged.



Humphreys Lucas with her middle school lacrosse team. photo courtesy of Elena Humphreys Lucas

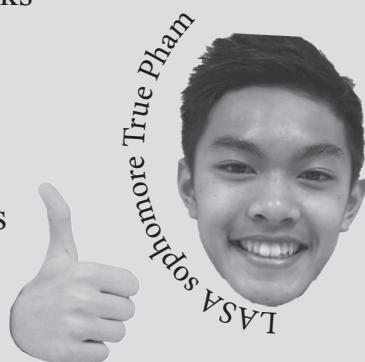
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Have an opinion about a new school policy? Have a bone to pick with something the Liberator has published? Anything else on your mind? Anything exciting happen to you over the summer? We work year round! Write us a letter and drop it off in portable 5A or in the boxes in the school offices.

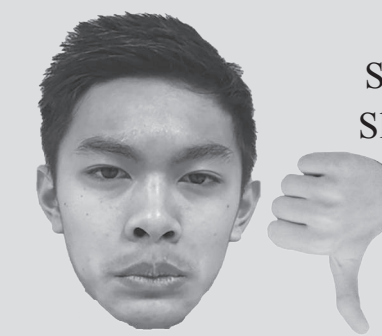
Thumbs up

- Fruit Snacks
- Summer
- P-Terrys
- Spinners
- Astronauts



Thumbs down

- Finals
- AP Tests
- Seniors Leaving
- Slow Computers
- Warm carrots



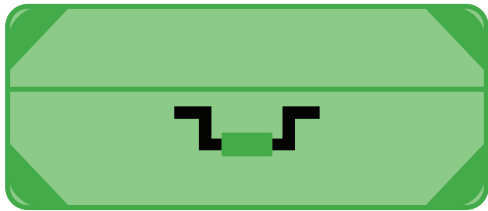
Every year for our last issue each senior on the *Liberator* staff writes a 30, which is a reflection, last words, or whatever wisdom they want to impart on the LASA community before they embark on their next journey: college. It is also our way to honor them for all of the hard work and dedication they have put into this paper. So, here's to our seniors: we love you, we thank you, you will be greatly missed!



Roxy Bonafont Editor-in-Chief

Closure is a funny thing. We like to tell ourselves that "real life" bears no resemblance to the neatly packaged arcs we see in books and movies, where moments slot comfortably into one another in a reassuring testament to the existence of fate. There's some truth to that, certainly, but there's also some truth to literature. Things have beginnings, and middles, and endings. Things come back to you, in time, in their own way.

Beginnings are tricky because they're almost imperceptible. They won't mean anything to you when they reveal themselves — that's why sometimes it's



easier to solve a maze by starting at the end and working backwards. Endings, I've found, are hard to miss. They

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make the air go still and heavy around a moment, make me feel like I'm shaking hands with some old part of me I forgot I was still carrying around. They have a weight and a temperament, a way of catching the light, that I've grown accustomed to recently. I'm not superstitious, but when I was in the backseat of the car rolling through half-empty Friday night streets, and we were singing along to that Killers song that we're obligated to love now, part of me knew I was saying goodbye to something I couldn't name.

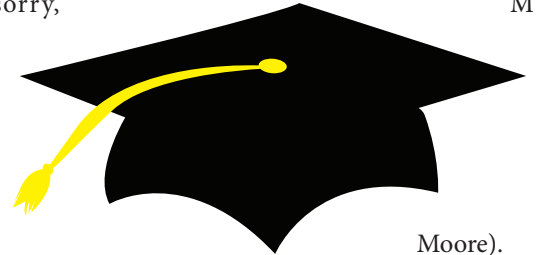
The endings can get overwhelming, concentrated in such a short period of my life. Writing this is an ending, in its own way. And I haven't even gotten to the big ones yet: the final issue of the paper (although once this is published, I'll have made that final export); graduation; one last long drive to California I won't come home from. I haven't said any of the hard goodbyes, or closed any of the doors that really matter. But I see it all coming from a mile away, because like I said, endings are hard to miss.

The one advantage of standing at the edge of a cliff, I've found, is that it offers a pretty amazing view. I've got dirt under my heels and air under my toes; I'm rocking back and forth on the thin fulcrum of an ending, and it's dramatic and climactic (literally, in this metaphor), but enough about that. The most important part of any story is the middle — the wondrous mess I can finally see sloping below me. On prom night, I sat on the floor with my best friends in the world, eating chicken nuggets and watching *The Prisoner of Azkaban*. In junior year, I skipped almost every class one day to spend ten hours in the newspaper portable. I failed a test; I cut my hair; I learned how to tell people I love them. I had Dr. Sjoquist, and I had a pop punk phase. I stood in the parking lot on the last day of sophomore year while the seniors' parting gift of eggs and condiments baked on the windshield of Oscar's car. I

wore purple on dry fall nights at football games, not out of interest in the sport, but because I liked the feeling of being part of something: "Hey baby, I wanna know, will you be my girl?"

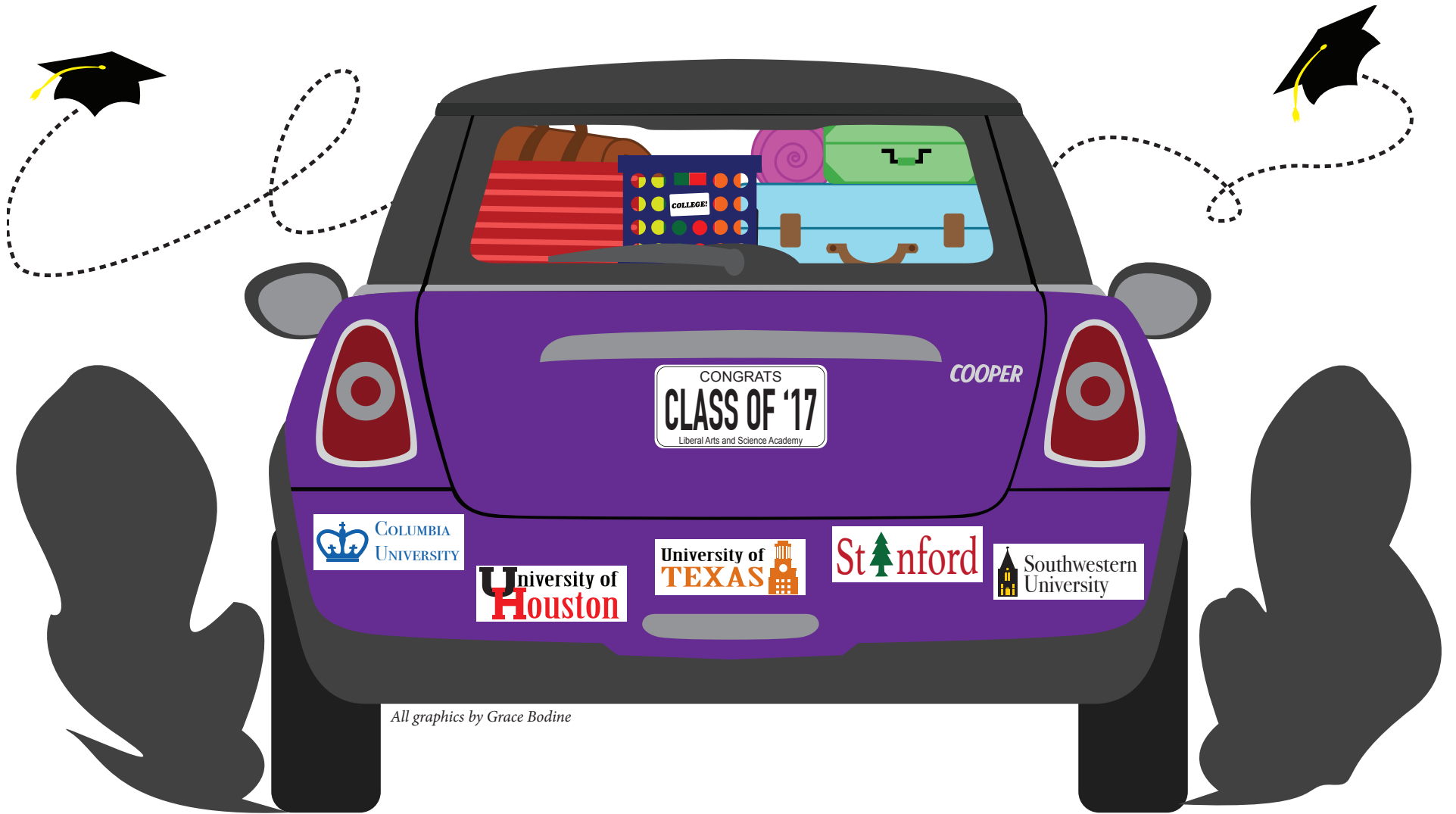
Obviously, this is all heavily romanticized sentimental nonsense. Four years is a long time, and it can feel a lot longer. Most days are the same, and a lot of them suck. Most of the time, being in the middle of something in your life feels hopelessly static, a relentless "Groundhog Day" -style purgatory comprised of interminable Tuesdays and demoralizing sack lunches. But endings change your perspective. They give everything a spiritual significance.

I don't have a great memory, and I don't remember all that much about high school, if I'm being honest: I don't remember the brutally early mornings, and I don't remember much about chemistry (sorry, M r s .



Moore). I don't remember how impossible long the past four years felt because, now that I'm at the ending, they've refined themselves to a few shining moments and feelings, made the quiet transition from life to myth while I wasn't looking. Most of what happened is going to get lost or forgotten, but the stuff that matters will stick around, like points of light to draw lines between.

Now that I'm at an ending, the middle is starting to make sense, and it's helping me find the beginning again. I'm not quite there yet — I'm still tracing my finger backwards through the maze: here's where I fell in love a little, and here's where I wrote the first news story that really mattered to me, and here's where the Prius died in the parking structure at midnight on junior prom and we had to wait for the boys to bring us gas in a red plastic can. This isn't all quite over yet, and I'm still not entirely sure what I'm looking for. I'll let you know when I find it. -30-



All graphics by Grace Bodine



Olivia Lee Editor-in-Chief

I walk tall through the hallways now. I've learned to prefer purple and moving through the school feels warm and comforting. I find myself in the hallways more and more often, and each time I pass our senior photos up on the wall, I'm reminded that my time in this place I love so much is coming to an end. I never imagined myself anywhere but LASA. The way I remember it, it was my only option. I applied, got in, and came; there was no deliberation or consideration. And I can't say these four years of my life have been perfect, but if I could somehow go back in time, there wouldn't be much I would want to change.

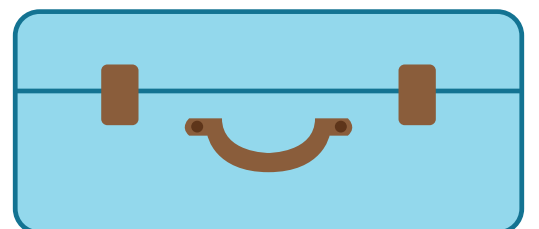
Yes it's true this school has amazing academics: there are wonderful, dedicated teachers and challenging classes. And it might sound atrocious and ungrateful, but right now none of that matters to me. What matters most to me are the unique and valuable friendships I've built here. Eating on the bleachers outside by the tennis courts, listening and interjecting in the stagnant humidity is the highlight of my day. One of my favorite aspects of LASA is how students have diverse interests and how conflicting opinions can ignite powerful discussion. It is strange sometimes to think that the presence of certain people can completely change an experience. Tiresomely filling in the blanks of a government packet, grasping to understand multivariable calculus, or just sitting and doing nothing,

U niversity of Houston

when I am with friends I love every second of it. It seems like this would be straightforward, but it took me 17 years to realize I needed to take charge of myself. The light in which I view things that have happened to me and my happiness is solely under my control. This realization changed my life for the better. I used to be so nervous. I'd watch the clock hands tick in World Geo, continuously calculating and counting down the minutes until club soccer practice was supposed to begin. I would stay late until the school was barren, habiting Dr. Paige's plain room to do homeworks multiple weeks in advance, because there wasn't time to bus south and then drive north again, the whole time having an empty, worried feeling deep in the pit of my stomach. I ended each freshman lunch rushing to the bathroom to change into basketball clothes. A deep fear of my coach and consequences of being late pulsed through my veins as I pulled white crew socks over my heels and up my ankles. That's not to say I didn't enjoy freshman year.

I came in with a handful of close friends who helped me learn to enjoy waking up way too early, being trapped inside an ugly building, missing out on beautiful weather and gorgeous natural light, and then going home with the force of a thousand things to do weighing down on my conscience. Each year outdid the last and I no longer count down. This year, I enjoyed the 55 minutes, socializing in the locker room before basketball and soccer practice. I am thankful as I moved through my four years, LASA allowed me to branch out, becoming more comfortable with myself and meeting new people to make memories with. I remember throwing various fruit peels towards the trash can and chuckling so hard I almost choked at the laughter and cackling coming from our locker cubby. It still makes me smile so hard when I hear Madeline laugh, it's like a contagious, infectious medicine. My first breakdown slapped me sophomore year. Tears streamed

down, dripping off my chin and soaking into my silky blue bed sheets, pleading, switch me out of newspaper. I didn't want sophomore year to be as hard as its first couple days. I didn't want to spend unending hours brainstorming pitches and angles and finding contacts. But I stayed, and ended up finding Roxy, one of my closest friends. We bonded over having no idea what we were doing and I wouldn't feel as confident or as happy as I do now if we hadn't become close. I exterminated bugs at the Austin Nature Center along a transect and screamed while trying to use tweezers to gently abduct an evading blattodea with Kendall, one of the most amazing people and athletes I have ever met. I hit my first home run and had the time of my life playing softball with Currie. I stood in the rain at a football playoff game next to Dresden and everyone went crazy the first time the band blasted rep your city. We hung hammocks by the softball field. I cried after my first and only fight with my best bud Theo who always keeps it real and insisted I was a guy when I first met him at Kealing. My lifeless Friday morning carpool despised me for singing loudly and atrocious dancing. I fought to keep bracket puns alive with Sessa. Dinner parties with Dayla, Evelyn, Caroline, Rithi, and the rest of squad provided delicious courses and conversation. I've found myself swept away in hours of meaningful discussion



and delightful adventures with friends I am about to be geographically separated from.

Now everyone seems to be fed up with the routine of school. But that's not how I feel. All these things that I've done, I did with people I love. Everyone I've met here has made me a better person and for that I am very thankful. I have loved high school. I'm excited for what the future will bring, but I know I will miss living my LASA experience. -30-

Farewell to our seniors: We love you!

Next year on the *Liberator*, the freshman, sophomores, and juniors will be stepping up in the absence of senior staff writers and editors. We are sad to see them go but excited for new changes.



Currie Larrimer
Staff Writer

Every fall the one thing I looked forward to was LBJ football games. As long as I could get through the week, every bad grade and mistake would disappear through each chant and every handful of powder thrown into the air. Friday night fields were my happy place and a way for me to feel connected in a way that I never had before. In the stands everyone comes together to have a good time and support the team. There's no competition or schoolwork to get in the way and everyone is just enjoying themselves being surrounded by their classmates. No one is worried about being better than their classmates and everyone is united for a single event.

The final game of the 2014 season against Vandegrift my sophomore year showed me just how much the football environment meant to me. The end of the season meant the end of the one thing that I looked forward to no matter what. No one else seemed to understand the gut wrenching ache I felt. Most people never will. Junior year never really got to me. Every Friday was another drive to Nelson and I never felt truly invested, but as soon as the season ended I counted down to the days I would get to stand front row at every game (a privilege of senior year that was definitely the most appealing to me.)

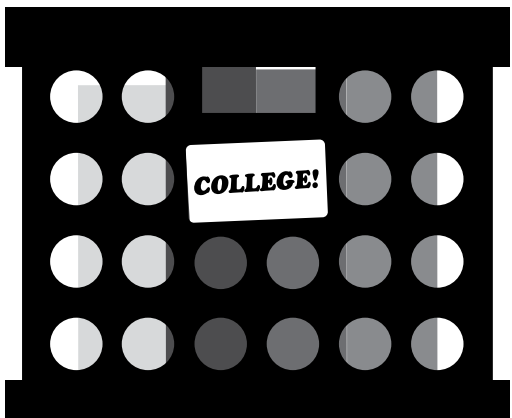
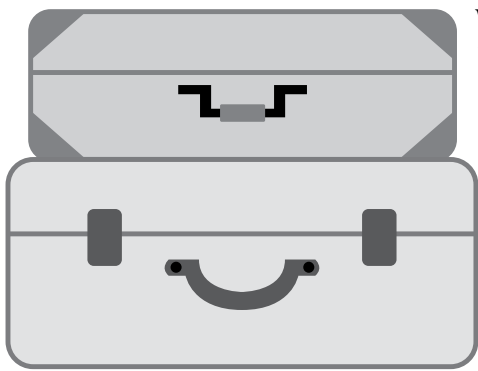
In the back of my mind I always dreamed of leading the student section through a season like the one I witnessed in 2014. I did what I thought I had to do to earn this



position but it was useless. I thought I could earn a spot by going to every sporting event but apparently that's not what it takes. You have to be liked by the senior who feels it's his god-given duty to appoint his friends no matter what he tells you. I was devastated when I wasn't able to stand in front of the fence at every game but I learned to enjoy the time I spent screaming at the top of my lungs and throwing glitter into a crowd of confused and unenthusiastic freshmen.

By the time the Mac game came around I was given the opportunity to lead the student section. Turning around to see one of the biggest student sections I had seen at a game since my freshman year, I finally felt that my goal had been achieved. I saw the fireworks from the front row and threw candy over my shoulder to the screaming crowd. I was finally in charge of the massive sea of enthusiastic high schoolers who wanted nothing more than to reaffirm our superiority over McCallum. I hadn't initially been given the chance to do what I had spent over three years fantasizing about, but the opportunity I got was an experience I'll never forget.

This year I applied to 11 colleges, only four of which are in Texas. I never imagined that I would only get into three of my eleven choices and that they would all be in Texas. This crushed me because although I've grown up loving Texas, I have never wanted anything more than to see new things and explore places I have never had the opportunity to live in. My goal at the beginning of the year was to get as far away from everything and everyone I know. As it turns out I'll be attending a university a mere 30 minutes away from Austin. I won't pretend that this is what I wanted, that I was, or even am now, extremely excited for the next four years. Somehow though I am confident that I will find something to change my attitude just as I did late last September standing in front of the LBJ/LASA student section. -30-



Kenza McKerrihan
Staff Writer

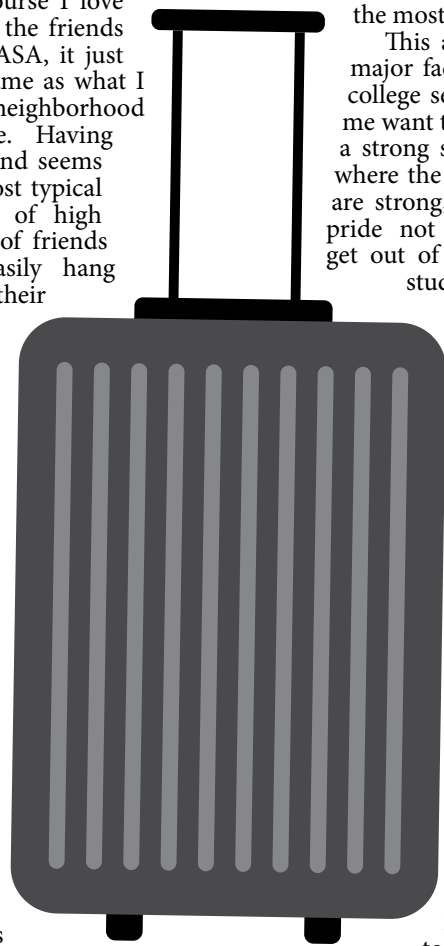
For me, LASA has always lacked a sense of community. Having never gone to a neighborhood school, I have never been able to experience being a part of a quintessential friend group that high school culture portrays. On the other hand, LASA draws students from all over AISD, which has given me the unique opportunity to get to know a diverse collection of people that, like me, have all come to LASA for a similar reason: to get a better education than their neighborhood school has to offer. This experience has enriched my life, but also left me with a sense of emptiness when it comes to community. Of course I love and appreciate all the friends I have made at LASA, it just is not quite the same as what I imagine having neighborhood friends feels like. Having neighborhood friend seems like one of the most typical and best aspects of high school - a group of friends that you can easily hang out with due to their proximity; no need to schedule hang outs in advance, or drive through traffic to meet up I feel like I have missed out on getting to know people with whom I can easily do homework or just watch TV and have fun with after school. This has been unachievable at LASA for me because everyone is so spread out throughout Austin.

Besides geography, another aspect of the absence of school community I have experienced at LASA is my lack of involvement in any extracurriculars that are tied to the school.



I have never participated in a school sport, theater, band, choir, orchestra, etc. This has been one of my biggest regrets as I reflect on high school. I wish I had taken the jump and just joined cross country for a season or auditioned for a play. I wish I had carved out time to try something new. The one LASA extracurricular that I have been in for a long time and been very involved in is Youth and Government. It is something I will always remember and cherish - not because I learned about the judicial branch or became the best attorney or perfected mock trial, but because it allowed me to get to know some of my classmates better and make memories that I will always have. Youth and Government felt like a small community, I just wish I had had more experiences at LASA like it. My main extracurricular has always been rowing, and while many people from LASA have at some point rowed, my rowing team is not fundamentally a core part of the LASA community. Rowing has brought so much to my life - it is where I have made some of my best friends, people I know who will be a part of life forever, where I have made some of my best memories; it is a place that I can call my own. This sense of community has been absent for me at LASA, at least for the most part.

This absence was one of the major factors I considered in my college selection process. It made me want to go to a big college with a strong sense of identity, a place where the alumni and connections are strong, a place with spirit and pride not only in what students get out of the school - but where students are part of a true community. Getting recruited and having the opportunity to be a D1 athlete at The University of Texas at Austin is exactly the experience that I have been looking for. The opportunity to represent my school next year while doing something I love is what I have always wanted. I can not wait to be a part of the athletic community at UT. I anticipate that every part of UT will be such a flip from LASA in regard to community. I do not regret LASA, but I also am not too sad that my time here is coming to an end. -30-



Quinn Simpson
News Editor

equal part. I wish I could say with clear-eyed confidence that I had planned it this way, that my stumbles were engineered for maximum learning value, but they were not.

I did plan most things. I'm a planner. I plan out the ways things could go, schedules, action items, objectives; you name it, I plan it. But I don't follow my plans. That's not the point. I plan in the way a snowplow driver clears the roads before morning rush hour, eliminating the clutter underfoot so I don't slip and fall down the moment I open my front door. So I don't have to spend every day shoveling my path clear as I go. So I can go a different route on a whim.

I also take note. I'm a note-taker. I think that's the other practice I've really relied on to succeed at LASA, often in spite of LASA. I make my notebook capture the interesting things, to pin them down so I don't lose my grip on them. I preserve relevant conversations, interesting articles, goals, thoughts, responses to unasked questions, points to cover in imaginary conversations, patterns, dreams,

I have a friend who always asks me: are you on an upward trajectory or a downward trajectory? I've been on an upward trajectory throughout my LASA experience, not in a skyrocketing-CO2-in-the-atmosphere way but in a sluggish-economic-growth way, with occasional heartening upticks, worrying downturns, moments of volatility and boredom in

all the delicate things that would otherwise get buried in the blinding blizzard of crap that accumulates day to day. Did I steal my strategy from that Bird by Bird book? Did LASA teach me something? Yikes.

I'm happy with where I ended up. Well, it hasn't ended really, and I don't expect it to for a while. Let me rephrase. If freshman me got a glimpse of senior me, he'd be pretty happy. This is because I plan my life by visualizing who I want to be in the future, and then I internalize that idea, and follow the impulses produced by that internal idea. In practice it becomes a gut feeling. I went with my gut. I'm glad that I did.

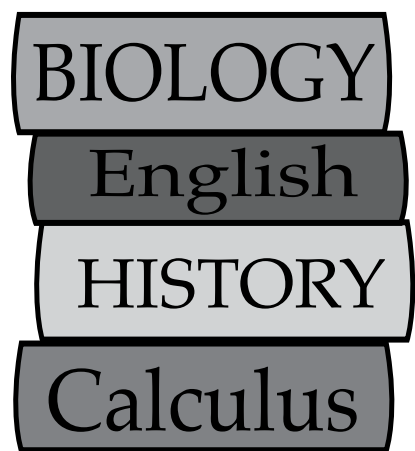
I mention my peculiar method of self-making because it's centered on idealism. I think idealism is too often marginalized by LASA students. Don't get me wrong, I'm a huge fan of pragmatism, and in fact I think the ideal approach to life exists near the midpoint of an idealism-pragmatism continuum. But I worry that pragmatism itself becomes the process, shaping lives and characters with nothing but the most immediate utility in mind. LASA students need to be inexplicable sometimes, unwilling to conform, obtusely adherent to their internal narratives. Those marching orders present a reason to be pragmatic. A reason to get out of bed every day and plan things and take note and make things



motivations. Acknowledge them. Address them. Practice empathy aggressively. It's oxygen for your weary soul.

That's really everything I have to say to LASA students. What do I say now? I could glorify my successes. That would be pretty easy, pretty lazy. I could retreat my failures. Cliche. I could talk about people who are important to me, who helped me along the way, but that would take up the rest of the paper. Anyways, they know who they are. Instead I'll just take a moment to reflect. Feel free to join me.

Are you reflecting? I'd tell you to stop and close



can go out and thrive in a world of real people. I encourage you to rage against the silliness and stupidity of your existence, to vent your frustration with mocking laughter or bitter cynicism. I do that, a lot. All the time. It's necessary. But don't let this inevitable disillusionment cloud the reality that each person you interact with is as real as you are (probably). Take a moment to consider their worries, their concerns, their aspirations, their

happen. My other admonition to the LASA student body: Be kind. We are here at this school to turn into real people, so we and thrive in a world of real people. I encourage you to rage against the silliness and stupidity of your existence, to vent your frustration with mocking laughter or bitter cynicism. I do that, a lot. All the time. It's necessary. But don't let this inevitable disillusionment cloud the reality that each person you interact with is as real as you are (probably). Take a moment to consider their worries, their concerns, their aspirations, their

stronger for it. -30-

African American and Latino outreach program results in 7th grade shadow day

GRANT MCCASLAND & ALDO ORDÓÑEZ
Staff Writers

LASA held two shadow days for black and Latino seventh graders on April 10 and 11, inviting minority students from Title 1 middle schools around the district. The shadows followed sophomore, junior and senior grade hosts around all day, learning what a normal day might look like if they were to attend the school. According to LASA Principal Stacia Crescenzi, primarily upperclassmen served as the hosts to show the seventh graders elective choices and career paths they could explore in the future.

“The inspiration is, to some extent, copy what colleges do,” Crescenzi said. “A lot of top-tier colleges go to high schools across the country and have special days where they bring in upperclassmen, specifically juniors, to explore the campus so that [juniors consider applying there]. We thought it would be a good idea to try that here.”

Crescenzi said she wants LASA to be more well-known and accessible to students across the city, especially within demographics that are underrepresented in the school’s student body. She thinks this program will be successful in increasing the diversity at LASA in the future. According to Crescenzi, this shadow day will be held next year, with some minor changes to be even more successful in the future.

“I think it’s important that we continue to grow our relationship with the middle schools and all the communities across Austin,” Crescenzi said. “People are moving in and moving out; people are in transition all across Austin, so I think it’s important that just because we exist, people know about us. Or if they know about us, [they can decide] if it’s a good match for them and their child.”

LASA counselor Marissa Rivera said that she agrees with Crescenzi, and emphasized the importance of having the school recognized and getting its name spread as an accessible program. Rivera said the inspiration to create the program came from her experience when she shadowed at a college. She was invited on campus as a high school junior, earlier in the application process, which got her interested and she ended up attending college there.

“I think that sometimes during the application process, when you’re looking at all these different magnet programs, you might not have had a chance to really experience what that school looks like,” Rivera said. “Sometimes it’s just a line on a piece of paper, so seventh grade shadow day helps them make a more informed decision during eighth grade. Like, ‘Oh hey, this isn’t just the Liberal Arts and Science Academy’, but they can associate that name with an experience, people they met, classes they went to, clubs, maybe, that they attended during their seventh grade shadow day.”

Underrepresentation is one of the main problems being addressed by this program, as the middle schools invited to shadow are primarily schools in Latino and black communities. Getting LASA more exposure in those areas will hopefully increase diversity at LASA by getting more applicants from predominantly Latino and black schools.

“As far as diversity and inclusion, we have students from all over the city, and things like seventh grade shadow day are done just to encourage representation from all schools in our city,” Rivera said. “I hope that it continues, there are several programs like this, more so at the college level.”

The seventh grade shadow days are only one small part of LASA’s diversification and outreach efforts, aimed at helping marginalized students overcome barriers that prevent them from applying and getting into LASA. One such barrier is a lack of familiarity with LASA’s complex application process. Some parts of the LASA application rubric are long term, and require months to years of preparation, such as STAAR test scores. This means finding out about them in advance and taking action with them is necessary to making a successful application, or even completing one at all. Yolanda Torres, co-chair of LASA’s Latino Outreach Committee has been concerned about these barriers and wants to increase accessibility to

LASA. “Some of these factors must be addressed long before they apply, e.g. standardized test scores, building teacher relationships for recs, etc,” Torres said. “Not knowing about these criteria before they actually apply can be very detrimental to their admission scores.”

The aim of these programs overall is to bring in more students to increase the diversity of LASA and the communities it represents. The seventh grade shadow day aims to achieve this in every way. Offering this one day of exposure can tip the scale for many young students who find themselves in a critical moment when their education, and consequently life, can be changed with something as simple as shadow day.

“The hope was that spending a day at LASA would not only put LASA on a student’s radar, but it would also give her [or] him the opportunity to ask questions about the program and the admission process, and to experience a little of what could be their future studies,” Torres said.



Clockwise from top: LASA junior Chris Soremekun and shadow student Cyrus Bello talk during the Seventh Grade Shadow Day; two shadow students talk during lunch; a shadow student poses for a photo as LASA juniors Olivia Dudley and Justyce Williams talk with a shadow student with LASA teacher Maricruz Aguayo-Tabor’s room, the location of the luncheon; a shadow student listens intently to Assistant Principal Marc Hernandez speak during the pizza lunch. photos by Kye Fisher.



City of Austin institutionalized racism task force details strategies for improvement in new report

ASPEN KISSINGER
Staff Writer

The City of Austin task force for Institutionalized Racism and Systemic Equities published a final report of recommendations on Tuesday, April 4 per the direction of mayor Steve Adler. According to Khotan Shahbazi-Harmon, a co-chair of the education section of the task force, the group was initiated by Adler to begin addressing multiple facets of institutionalized racism.

“The task force was not a group to solve racism,” Shahbazi-Harmon said. “It was a group to write a report to the mayor with some recommendations of how to solve racism at a personal level, how to talk about it, commitments to systems, how to talk about systems and how they need to look at the interrelationship among racism and the different sectors that were identified.”

The task force had five categories: education, real estate and housing, health, finance and criminal justice. Each category researched and discussed different aspects and concerns of institutionalized racism and systemic inequities in Austin. Then they wrote a report of recommendations,

which was compiled into the published report for the public and the mayor.

“What you are going to learn from the report is that these are not isolated cases [of inequality in systems],” Shahbazi-Harmon said. “These are not random cases; there’s a pattern that begins to emerge and so that’s the

It was a group to write a report to the mayor with some recommendations of how to solve racism at a personal level [and] how to talk about it.

-Task force member Khotan Shahbazi-Harmon

important part of it.”

The research-based report enables Adler to point out and prioritize concerns and recommendations based

on evidence and the analysis conducted by task force members. Education section co-chair Richard Reddick believes Mayor Steve Adler must take action after receiving the completed report.

“Well, in a lot of ways, the ball is in the mayor’s court right now,” Reddick said. “He has to make decisions about what to prioritize, what to advocate for, and these recommendations, I think many of them will see that people are working with committees, organizations, universities, colleges, school, in the same issue.”

Reddick said that involvement is needed not only from the mayor and task force members but also from local citizens. He believes that everyone has a role in the community to learn and share information concerning the effects of racism in Austin.

“One thing that was very clear to us, even though we were part of the steering committee of the task force, [was that] this is going to be an issue that would require the involvement and investment of all Austinites, so you know the people who read the paper obviously, students at LBJ,” Reddick said, “It’s going to be critically important that we see, first of all what’s been recommended, and second of all how can we be involved [in the solution].”

The report can be found online at: <http://www.austintexas.gov/edims/document.cfm?id=274540>

THE SKINNY

District 6 Trustee, Board VP Paul Saldaña Resigns

MARLEN AVILA
Staff Writer

On April 7, Austin Independent School District (AISD) Board of Trustees vice president and District 6 trustee Paul Saldaña announced his resignation. After serving as an active board member for the past two and half years, Saldaña said that it was the right time to leave. Saldaña had approximately two years left in his term and despite his early departure, expressed his appreciation of his experience on the board.

"I will forever cherish the many long hours and sleep deprivation we shared as a team in an effort to serve the students, parents, teachers and staff of this community," Saldaña said in an interview with Austin's Community Impact Newspaper.

According to Saldaña, working on AISD Board of Trustees is essentially volunteer work since it is an elected position without a wage pay. Saldaña said that he has been contemplating resignation for several months and cited a need for more family time as his primary motivation.

Saldaña's resignation will leave an open spot on the Board of Trustees and highlight the lack of minority representation on the Board. Saldaña was one of two trustees of color on the nine-person board, and only Hispanic board member, in a district which is nearly 60 percent Hispanic. Saldaña was known for his advocacy for equality and emphasized concerns for educational equity in board meetings.

"All the issues I've wanted to raise and address, I've been able to do that," Saldaña said. "The last thing I want to do is spend the last 16 months [of my term] complacent. It's time for a new objective perspective to represent not only the children of District 6, but to also bring that fresh objective perspective to the board."

Saldaña's term officially ended on April 24. During the board meeting that day, Saldaña gave his farewell speech. His position will be filled by appointment and his replacement announced June 12. Saldaña said that he retains his ideological commitment to public education.

"I firmly believe supporting public education is a civic responsibility, and I remain committed to supporting this district as a community advocate, but most importantly as the parent of two elementary students and as a husband to an elementary teacher in AISD," Saldaña said.

Schedule changes include later start time and alignment with LBJ for 2017-18

ANDY DEGRASSE, CAROLINA GOKINGCO & QUINN SIMPSON
Staff Writer & News Editors

Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, LASA and LBJ will adopt a synchronized campus schedule. Both schools will start the day at 8:30 AM and end at 3:45 PM. All students on campus will have lunch at the same time. According to LASA Principal Stacia Crescenzi, this change will enable LASA and LBJ students to build relationships across schools.

"The biggest improvement I think will be the fact that both lunches will be at the same time," Crescenzi said. "If we want students to come together based on shared clubs, and if they only meet at lunch, then it wouldn't work under the old schedule. My hope for next year is that you'll see much more crossover between clubs and organizations. I'm really hoping that a lot of authentic relationships [will be] formed."

Crescenzi said the joint planning group of LBJ and LASA students that was created earlier this year to improve relationships between the two schools advocated the change. They similarly believed an aligned schedule would increase interaction across schools.

"We worked with the [group] to form an understanding from both LASA and LBJ students," Crescenzi said. "[Both believed] that a shared schedule was key for the relationships we wanted to build between the two groups."

The change will also allow LASA and LBJ students to spend more time together in shared athletic activities. According to LBJ athletic director Pete Moreno, the current schedules result in LASA students attending sports practice 30 minutes earlier than the rest of the team. This ultimately leads to separate groups comprised of solely LASA students and solely LBJ students. Moreno says the new schedule will enable more interaction.

"Combined classes give us the chance to do work in classes that we normally don't get to do," Moreno said. "Now there will be more time for both groups to work together more. Next year, we will start practice in the morning and go through the athletics period. Hopefully with a full combined class together, they can get to know each other better."

While Crescenzi sees many benefits to the alignment, some compromises had to be made in order to implement the change. Synchronizing transportation between the two schools was a substantial logistical challenge.

"LASA and LBJ both had their non-negotiables, and transportation also had some limitations," Crescenzi said. "Every time you move a school off of a standard start time, it means the buses and drivers can work less routes, which means that your expense to the district, so trying to minimize expense while being reasonable to students was easily the biggest logistical difficulty."

Like Moreno, Crescenzi believes the synchronization of extracurricular activities will also be beneficial. According to Crescenzi, the schedules caused LASA kids to wait 40 minutes because LBJ is dismissed at 4:30 PM.

"This year we've had LASA kids waiting 40 minutes for LBJ to get out so they can start practice," said Crescenzi. "This is pretty awkward on both sides because the LASA people have to wait for so long, and the LBJ kids know that they were waited on."

Texas Senate advances charter school voucher bill criticized by public school districts

ASHLEY THOMAS
Staff Writer

Senate Bill 3, which essentially serves as a private school voucher system, has been passed with a 7 - 3 vote on the senate floor, moving to the House for a final vote. The bill allows students leaving public schools and those entering into kindergarten to use their government saving accounts to pay for things such as private school tuition, classes, or education therapy. This bill will cost the public education system over \$3.9 million each year and will go towards paying off tuition and "other non-public educational expenses" within private schools. State Senator Van Taylor, R-Plano, who voted for the bill, believes that these vouchers would relieve the public school system from much of their debt by having new student flow into the private school system rather than having them fill up the public school system.

"Because we're actually spending less money per child in this program there would actually be more money per child in the public education system," Taylor said.

The bill has received backlash from several Texas legislators who have denounced the practice of subsidizing private school tuition. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos is in favor of subsidizing private schools, minimal accountability and the use of charter school vouchers, and many conservative states already have voucher programs, but according to the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas (ACLU TX), charter school vouchers tend to do more harm than good. The voucher allows parents to redeem the expenses that it would cost AISD to send that child to school to put towards tuition and online schooling. The problem is that expenses such as the cost of a teacher's salary, utilities, facilities or other permanent costs would remain unpaid for as the money supplied from the state for that child would no longer be coming in. ACLU TX emphasizes the overstretched nature of the current Texas education funding system, which they claim can barely afford to fund one sector of education, let alone two. Public school vouchers were initially designed to be given out to families that needed tax breaks and couldn't afford the cost of sending their child to a privately funded facility, but the percentage of money being included in miscellaneous education funds for schools seems to be increasing while the percentage

of dollars going towards paid tuition is gradually decreasing. According to Special Projects Coordinator and Intergovernmental Relations at AISD Frank Fuller, SB 3 has the potential to limit the scope of a vouchers extent to protect how much money is being taken out of the public school system.

"Our public school budgets are already stretched thin," Fuller said. "The state's share of funding public education has declined from about 50 percent in 2008 to 42.7 percent in 2017 so that places a significant burden on local property taxpayers who are shouldering more and more of the educational tax burden... Any diversion of public funds from public education takes money out of the classroom."

In a paper released by Altnet.org during the early stages of Texas' implementation of charter schools, administrators promised to focus their curriculum and learning initially on low-income and troubled students that have been displaced from the public school

system. However, a study produced by The University of Texas in 2016 showed that students who graduated from charter schools had done worse on their standardized test scores, and campuses had increased racial and class segregation. Senator Kel

There would actually be more money per child in the public education system.

-State Senator Van Taylor

Seliger, R-Amarillo, believes that using public dollars to send students to schools where they could potentially be taught segregated practices or anti-American doctrines shows the lack of accountability present in the bill. The money lost in the public school system to private schools has gradually increased over the years. The Center for Public Policy Priorities predicts that \$3.9 to 19 million could be lost this year alone from students using the SB 3 voucher, if it passes. Senator Seliger said that the could be disastrous for the public school system.

"The problem is that there's absolutely no accountability on the bill, and for most of the young people in schools in Texas they've got to take the STAAR test, and it goes towards accountability where their schools have to be accountable, but being private schools and things like that there's no accountability," Seliger said. "There's a situation where if a privatized school is an Islamic school and wants to teach a doctrine that is anti-American, anti-Bible, things like that, they have a right to do so. Do we have obligation to play public dollars for it? The answer is no we don't, but we have no protections for that in the bill."



LASA sophomore Dmitry Pokinboroda who normally gets lunch from the cafeteria orders from the Nacho Average food truck. photo by Jeffrey Kovar.

Nacho Average Food Truck brings lunchtime innovation to LASA

JEFFREY KOVAR
Staff Writer

High schools in the Austin Independent School District (AISD) are now offering students another option for school lunches via a district food truck. Nacho Average Food Truck came to LBJ High School to serve their fresh and organic food to the students on April 6 and April 28. Nacho Average Food Truck is an initiative started by the Food and Nutrition Services Department in AISD. LASA sophomore Dmitry Pokinboroda said that he appreciated the high quality of the food.

"I thought it was really good," Pokinboroda said. "It is actually real food. It tastes like real beef, and they made it right on the spot in front of me which was really nice. It tastes super fresh and delicious."

Nacho Average Food Truck was requested by parents and students that wanted a food truck for AISD schools. AISD wanted the food truck to serve healthy, natural food, according to AISD Food and Nutrition Services Director Anneliese Tanner. Tanner said she appreciated the challenge of trying to get the food truck running smoothly.

"Whenever you are reinventing something, and we are trying to invent school food, you learn along the way," Tanner said. "Part of the fun of a new program is you get to brainstorm and experiment."

The food truck is one of many initiatives that AISD's Food and Nutrition Services have undertaken, like breakfast in the classroom, salad bars, scratch cooking and global flavors, and after school meals. Providing quality food to students has always been a priority for AISD, and Tanner said the food truck is another outlet to do so.

"The food truck is an innovative service model that we are bringing to students, so that we are able to offer new foods in a way that features the culture of Austin," Tanner said. "The reason we started the district food truck is to ensure that our healthy, good tasting meals

are available from the food truck."

Plans for the food truck for next year have already gotten underway. Nacho Average Food Truck wants to have a menu that would change depending on the season, so a different menu for the fall, winter and spring. Internships for students who are interested in cooking will hopefully also be available, according to Tanner.

"We have plans for evolving the food truck program," Tanner said. "I hope we will have student input on the theme, and items students want to have on the menu. We will be rolling out another food truck that can be more frequent to our campuses. We would also like to have internships available where students interested in culinary arts can work on the food truck. We will also use the food truck at events to show the community to quality of the food that we are serving here in the district."

Student input on changes to the food truck will also be taken into account, according to Tanner. While Pokinboroda was very content with quality of the food and wouldn't change a thing, LASA sophomore Christian Salinas said he would like to see a more expansive menu in the future.

"I would like there to be more options on the menu," Salinas said. "People like options and having more food to choose from is really nice. The menu was pretty limited, so being able to maybe broaden that in the future would be cool. They also don't come around to schools very often, which maybe isn't a fault of theirs. Just having them around more would be nice because I actually liked their food for lunch."

Both Salinas and Pokinboroda normally gets their lunches from the cafeteria. The food options from the cafeteria is limited, and they aren't as fresh or tasty as the food from the food truck, according to Pokinboroda. Salinas said he enjoyed having more options for lunch at school.

"Eating salad every day from the cafeteria gets to be pretty boring, so again getting that option to have more of a variety is really nice," Salinas said.

Potential New Location for LASA

continued from page 1

“For LASA it would give us the opportunity to accept more students and therefore increase our diversity naturally,” Crescenzi said. “I think that the other benefit in general, although it’s not for LASA, is for LBJ to be able to grow, in total population but also programmatically, the way they’d like to. I think it allows both schools to make decisions and goals that are the best for their individual students, instead of the constant compromise which naturally happens when you’re working together every day.”

However, drawbacks have been pointed out. Many East Austin advocates have posited that the move goes against principles of diversity and integration. Both the Liberal Arts Academy (LAA) and the SA, which later combined to form LASA, were originally founded in part as a desegregation initiative. AISD District 1 Trustee Dr. Ted Gordon therefore said he views a LASA move away from LBJ as a betrayal of its mission and a failure of desegregation. Gordon’s constituency includes the LBJ area in northeast Austin. As one of the two trustees to vote against LASA’s move, he said the move was a cop-out on the part of the district.

“The district has refused to face the problems that LASA and LBJ have, because they are complex,” Gordon said. “And now, rather than facing up to these problems between the two schools, the solution now is to give up and say alright, let’s separate. Unfortunately, it’s going to cost a lot of money to do that; second of all, it’s going to violate, I think, some of [AISD’s] basic principles; and third of all it’s not going to happen right now and so you can’t run away from it.”

Opposition has also come from LASA and SA alumni, who have emphasized the colocation with LBJ as an integral part of their academic experiences. SA alumnus and LBJ 1990 class president Sam Turner said that LASA’s proposed move is symbolic of the resegregation of America, and took away from the magnet’s educational value.

“There’s no permutation of this that’s in the best interest of the students,” Turner said. “My class and the classes around us valued so much the idea of the combined education and combined student body. It was a different thing than any other school. It breaks our heart that you guys and the future generations aren’t going to get it.”

Ironically, one of the main reasons LASA is looking to move is to increase representation within the student body. Crescenzi said that the increase in physical space that a move could bring would increase the racial and economic diversity of the school.

“It would absolutely allow us to create the campus culture that we want, so that we could really help people to understand that we welcome everybody who’s interested to apply, and everybody who we accept to join us,” Crescenzi said. “Some of the students who we’re telling no now, we won’t be telling no. And I’m hoping some of those things, just in and of themselves, will increase the economic and racial diversity of the campus, and... the diversity of student interests on campus.”

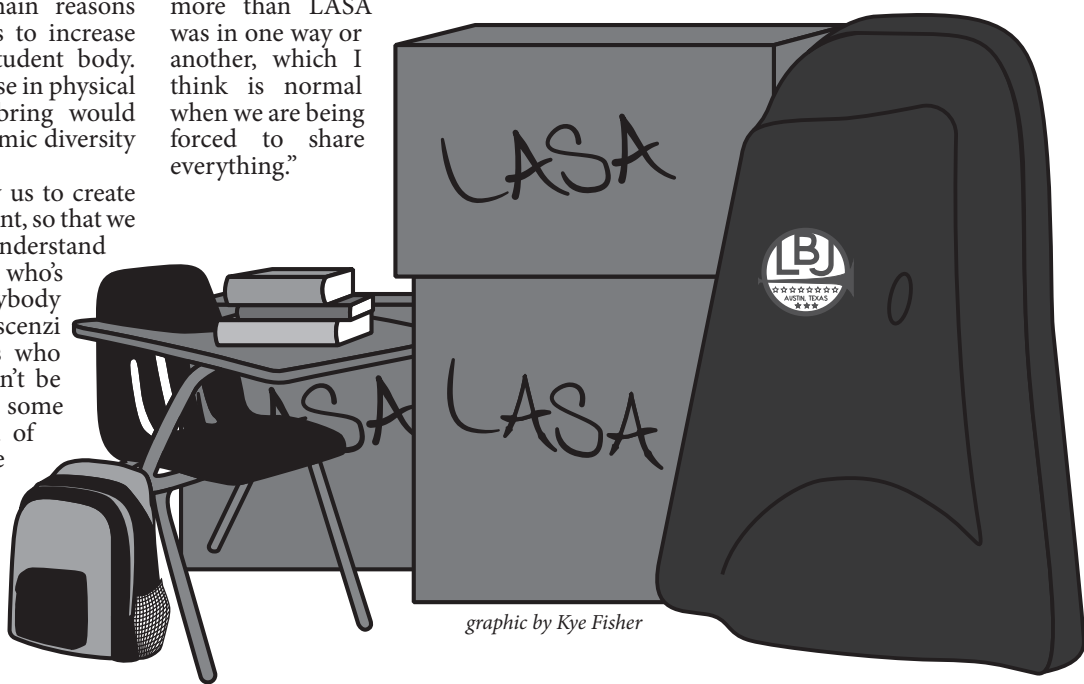
This move is divisive even on the LASA/LBJ campus (see pages 8-9.) In a

survey of 132 LASA and 8 LBJ students, around 57 percent of students supported a LASA move, while half that number (28 percent) supported keeping LASA on the LBJ campus. A tenth of students were undecided, and four percent advocated another option. LASA junior Marcella Cannati said in a response to the survey that she supported a LASA move.

“I think it’s important that both schools be given the space they need to grow to their full potential,” Cannati said. “Sharing such a small campus can create a lot of hurt feelings where one school feels like it’s missing out because of the existence of the other school on their campus. I can think of quite a few times when I have felt frustrated because I felt like LBJ was getting more than LASA was in one way or another, which I think is normal when we are being forced to share everything.”

Despite concerns from alumni and others that a LASA move would directly hurt the district’s desegregation goals Phipps also emphasized the dual purposes of the SA that became LASA, which was founded in the 1980s as both a desegregation initiative and as an appeal to business communities looking for more STEM-savvy Austinites to employ.

“The Liberal Arts and Science Academies, separate programs, founded in the [1980s] to be a mechanism for desegregation, are not what we’re talking about,” Phipps said. “Now we have students from all parts of town, it’s a diverse student body... a lot of kids who want an advanced academic program. We can do that anywhere.”

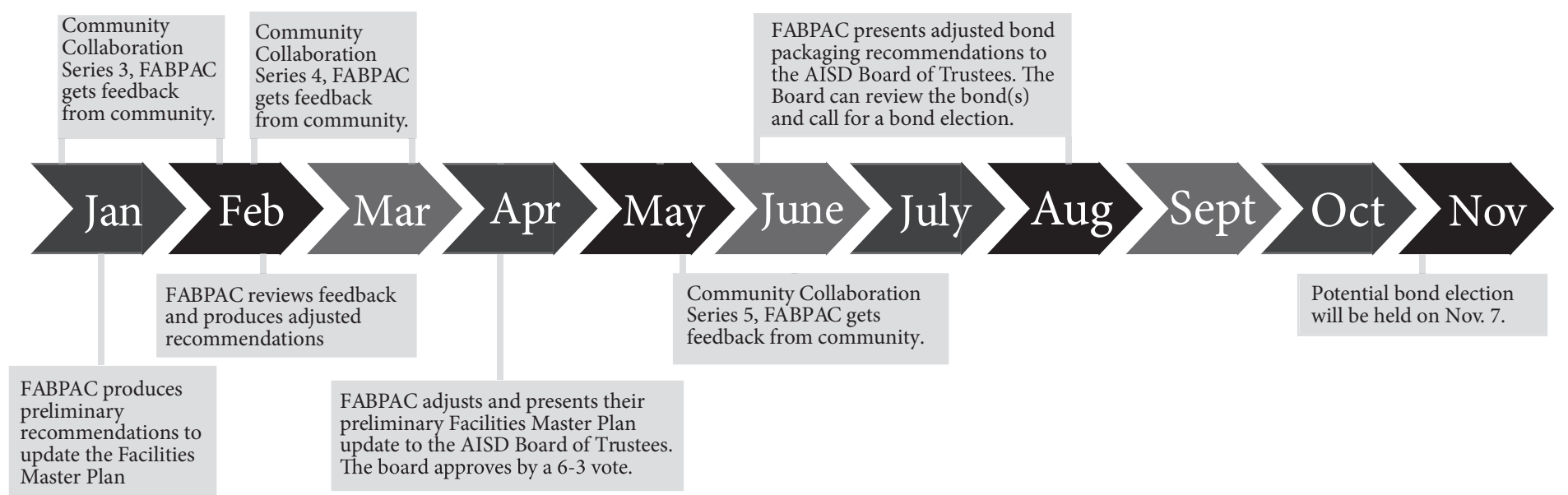


graphic by Kye Fisher

FABPAC PLANS AHEAD

QUINN SIMPSON
News Editor

The AISD Facilities Master plan was approved by the AISD Board of Trustees on Apr. 3. The Facilities and Bond Planning Advisory Committee (FABPAC) has been working since then to package parts of the plan into bonds. The first bond, likely asking taxpayers to fund LASA and other high-priority projects, is expected to go before voters in the Nov. 2017 election.



Amateur Radio Club

continued from page 1

and resistors. Seeing them build something and seeing it work, I think that’s pretty fascinating as well.”

After seeing his students succeed in the classroom, Risinger was pleased with how they performed in the competition. He said that watching students win after contacting 46 U.S. states and 18 countries was rewarding for him.

“We made a lot of contacts, and we are literally keeping LASA on the map internationally,” Risinger said. “A lot of people would say they’re keeping LASA on the map, but I would think it’s the Amateur Radio Club through K5LBJ.”

Not only does Risinger enjoy participating in amateur radio competitions, but he also finds gratification in seeing the students explore something new within the classroom. Because amateur radio can be used for such advanced purposes, such as working with receivers, transmitters, and antenna, Risinger likes seeing students try endeavors within the field they hadn’t tried before.

“In the last year or two, we have been experimenting

with communication through satellites, so if you look on the roof [at LASA] you can see a satellite tracking station,” Risinger said. “No one would say communicating through satellites is old-fashioned.”

Along with working with satellite technology, the Amateur Radio Club experiments with Morse code, a slightly more outdated form of communication that uses short and long signals to represent letters. This allows Amateur Radio to communicate with people who don’t speak English and still make connections with people through the radio.

“I would say my favorite thing is to see students take an interest in something they never knew they had an interest in,” Risinger said, “For example, we still play with Morse code, and some kids are really good at it. If you use Morse code, you can really talk to anybody, so it really opens up your world that you can talk to somebody in Japan or talk to somebody in Brazil.”

A student who especially enjoyed speaking to new people on the radio was senior Reed Hanson. He is taking the semester-long elective this year and participated in this competition for the first time, which required him to spend the whole day in the radio room communicating with people.

“We had one person sitting there just calling out [on the radio] and saying ‘Hey, we want to talk to people,’”

Hanson said. “We also had somebody on the computer logging all the contacts on some database.”

While competing, Hanson alone contacted over 200 places. When asked about his contribution to the contest, Hanson said it was a positive and validating experience.

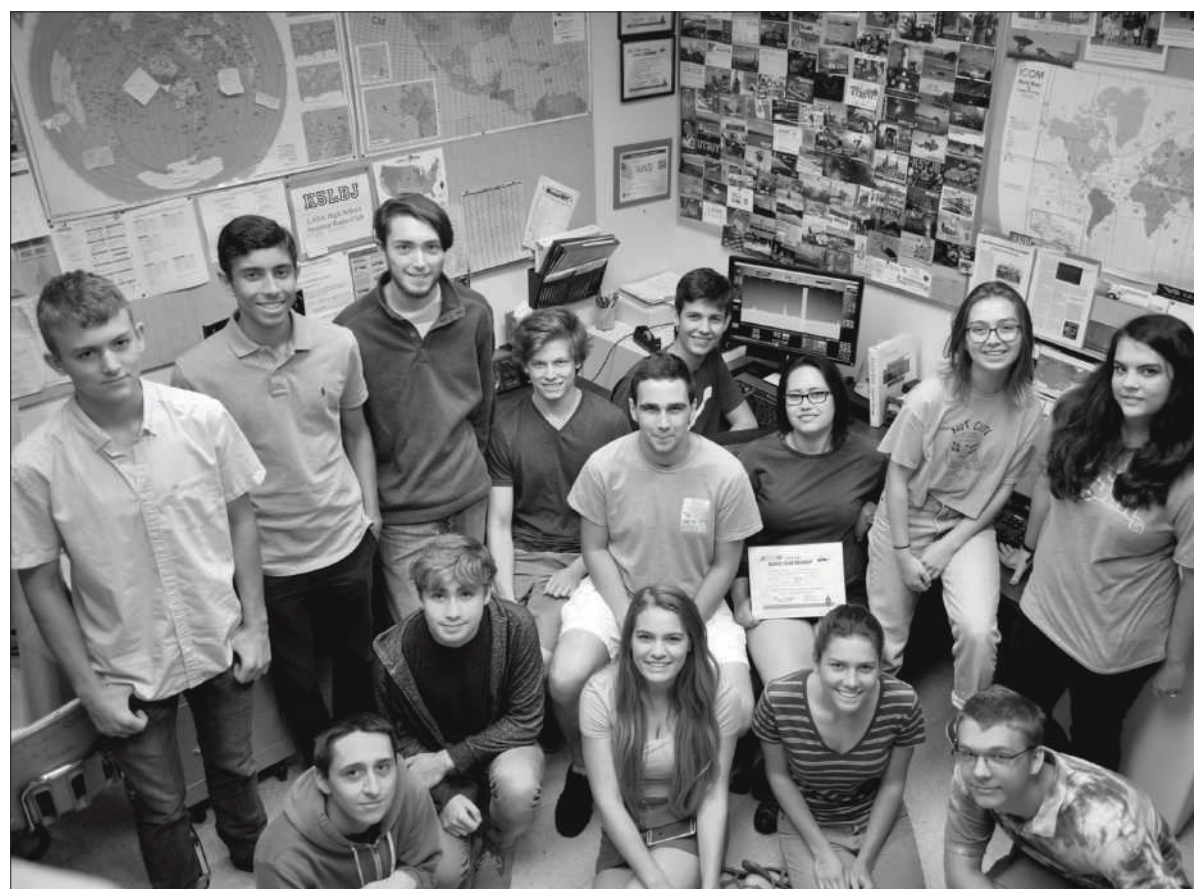
“[Being in the competition] was really incredible,” Hanson said, “I talked to so many people and they all had wonderful things to say about the club.”

He said that working in the radio room throughout the semester, especially during School Club Roundup, was very enjoyable for him, and he loved talking to the people. One of his classmates, LASA senior Kyla Hayworth, was another participant and worked in the radio room for a total of seven and a half hours during the competition.

“The week that we had School Club Roundup, I was in the radio room talking for an hour and half every single day,” Hayworth said. “You just get to talk to a bunch of really nice old people who are like ‘I’m glad you’re having fun at the radio!’ We’re like ‘Yeah we’re having fun!’”

During this semester, Hayworth received her amateur radio license and learn a lot more about amateur radio in general. She said that after winning first place, all of the class members were very proud of their accomplishments.

“One of the missions of amateur radio is to foster relationships between people,” Hayworth said. “Having made a lot of contacts, I think we did that.”



The LASA Amateur Radio class poses in the “Radio Room.” Senior Kyla Hayworth (center) holds the first-place certificate the group earned in the February 2017 “School Club Roundup.” photo courtesy of Ronald Risinger



Junior Sora Sunby, left, makes contacts for the School Club Roundup competition at K5LBJ, LASA’s Amateur Radio Club, as senior Tom Gilburg logs her contacts and junior Zoe Czarnecki stands by. K5LBJ has been active in the “School Club Roundup” contest since 2005. photo courtesy of Ronald Risinger

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

LASA and LBJ: our evolution



LBJ HS opens
1974

LASA and LBJ Split into Two Separate Schools

MEENA ANDERSON & CLARA MORSE
Life and Feature Editor & News Editor

One of the most controversial decisions made by the Board of Trustees, and one frequently criticized in recent years has been the official programmatic split of LASA and LBJ in 2007, resulting in the two schools only sharing a physical campus and UIL activities. After the 2002 merging of the Liberal Arts Academy (LAA), previously located on the Johnston High School campus, and the Science Academy (SA) on the LBJ campus, LASA had grown in population and, many have argued, grew apart from LBJ in its programming.

However, the primary motivating factor for the split was the possibility of LBJ receiving \$3 million grant from the Gates foundation, which required physical separation. LASA social studies teacher Neil Loewenstern, who also taught at the LAA prior to the LASA merger, positively viewed the LASA/LBJ split.

"My understanding of that split was that [LBJ] needed to be able to identify themselves separate from [LASA] so that they could develop programs that would really benefit the kids at LBJ," Loewenstern said. "I think that helped to create an identity for [both schools] so we could say, 'Look, this is who we are, this is what we do, we have a school here that meets a particular need of a lot of students in the district.' And that allowed that identity to come out and for us

to get noticed within the district, the state, and nationally which I think was very helpful for the kids that were coming here, and that we are getting that exposure on a more national level that helped our kids get into colleges as they recognized who we were."

However, this split has also been argued to have a negative effect. The SA and LBJ were completely integrated, and many alumni of the SA and LBJ have advocated for a recombination of LASA and LBJ. LBJ alumnus James Buratti argued that the physical

being labeled but then the system physically separates you so it's enforced every day. That is pretty much impossible for a teenager to overcome on their own. [The administration must] remove that physical barrier if both programs stay at LBJ."

Advocates such as 1990 LBJ Science Academy graduate Jennifer Hawkins have pointed to this split as detrimental to the self-esteem as LBJ students because, she said, it implies they are lower than LASA. However, former LBJ Principal Patrick Patterson made the decision to have LBJ be on the ground floor to protect LBJ students.

"I chose [the bottom floor] for survival reasons. If there were a tornado or a fire, I want my kids to be on the main floor," Patterson said. "That is why I chose the main floor. It ain't [LASA] being closer to heaven, it was not a hierarchy. I've said that publicly over the years, many times."

Patterson said he does not view the split negatively, and that as LBJ and LASA have been independent of each other for ten years, both schools have had chances to develop their own identities. Loewenstern agreed, emphasizing the separate identities and purposes the schools have developed in the decade since the split.

"I don't think that we can go back to [being one school], we've already made that split a number of years ago, and I think it has helped to create an identity for both schools that didn't exist before as much," Loewenstern said. "I think some of that integration that was happening when we were one school was more than reality. I like that we have things share with LBJ

and I think there's opportunities for us to integrate on lots of other levels, and maybe even share some classes. But I think going back to one school masks their issues."

According to a study by the National Center for Educational Statistics in 2015, white students attend schools that are on average nine percent black, while black students attend schools that are on average 48 percent black, showing a large difference in average black student population density nationally.

"During the initial planning phases, my position was 'the worst thing we could do is split the schools and keep the kids in the same building,'" Patterson said. "LASA needs to grow. The city of Austin is growing, so we're going to need a bigger school to accommodate this population."

Hawkins said that she believes that 10 plus years of graduates have been surrounded by a less diverse climate than the students attending LBJ and LASA before the 2007 split. All classes were open to all students, and you didn't even know who was still in the Science Academy until graduation day.

"I guess the only truth that I would say I feel is that it does feel separate; that separation feels real, but I don't feel like there's some intentional racism," Loewenstern said. "I think if there's anything it's just systemic, part of the society in general. We gave up on integration through busing, which was actually successful, and that the idea of putting magnets into schools to create integration was not a particularly great plan. I don't think you can create integration through a magnet, and I think if we are pretending that that's working then we are all just fooling ourselves."

During the initial planning phases, my position was 'the worst thing we could do is split the schools and keep the kids in the same building. LASA needs to grow.

-Former LBJ Principal Patrick Patterson

split between schools perpetuates systemic racism.

"You've created a class system," Buratti said. "The 'smart' kids and the 'others.' And the others are inevitably the 'dumb' kids. The system is imposing that on the students. It's hard enough

2007

1985

Before The Split

SARAH LUCAS, CLARA MORSE & TREVOR ANDERSON
Life & Feature Editor, News Editor, & Staff Writer

The LBJ Science Academy (SA) was established in 1985 at the LBJ campus as Austin's first magnet program. The program was designed to increase enrollment and integration, as well as providing the Austin business community with students prepared for intensive STEM environments. Magnet programs were a solution to addressing the desire for desegregation without mandatory busing, which was unpopular — the SA was a school of choice, and so students that chose to come and were accepted had consented to being bused by default.

More personal benefits to the students were also touted. Housing the SA at LBJ HS afforded magnet students support from a pre-existing, established facility and thus a more "traditional" high school experience, including access to extracurriculars. The LBJ facility seemed the obvious choice to house the science academy — the SA would hopefully boost declining enrollment numbers a result of a variety of factors: according to The Austin Chronicle, significant changes in school boundaries and grade patterns had taken place, alongside a lack of growth and development only exacerbated by a maturing population. The SA also aimed to promote growth by allowing local students opportunities to take AP and honors courses, as well as increased college preparation. Despite initial neighborhood resistance to a magnet school, it appeared to subsist in the face of success. Several alumnae commented that these mutual benefits fostered a sense of unity among the students. 1990 LBJ SA graduate and Austin lawyer Sam Turner said that LBJ and SA students felt like part of one community, despite the different environments students came from.

"Everybody in my class that I've talked to, regular LBJ or Science Academy, really believes that we've benefitted, more than an ordinary student body did, from both the process of knitting together as a student body and living it," Turner said. "You had to understand everybody else's truth. You've got the rich kids from the hills around the lake and people over here and everybody had their own thing that they brought in. No one was in their comfort zone, and so we had to create our own new comfort zone for the combined classes."

1990 LBJ SA alumnus and Harvard graduate Jennifer Hawkins agreed with Turner. She said that the inclusiveness of the

integrated school provided for a more accommodative climate, one she believes contrasts to the distinct division between LBJ and LASA at present.

"The Science Academy was prestigious, but it was more like being in AP vs. Honors, or being in Calc AB vs. Calc BC," Hawkins said. "You're not in a different school — you just take different classes with varying levels of difficulty. If you were in the Science Academy, your classes were just

Everybody in my class that I've talked to, regular LBJ or Science Academy, really believes that we've benefitted, more than an ordinary student body did, from both the process of knitting together as a student body and living it.

-SA alumnus Sam Turner

harder — but no one was walking around talking about 'those kids' who weren't in the hard classes."

Moreover, the integrated school meant that students had equitable access to advanced and honors classes offered as part of the SA regardless of whether they were part of the magnet program. This provided a means for neighborhood students to reap the benefits of the resources available to the Academy.

"Any of the non-Science Academy students could take those classes. The reason behind that was to give kids who may not have had access to the best elementary and middle school programs an opportunity to take these courses that would set them up better for college."

Additionally, as a unified school, those who decided to leave SA could stay at LBJ, even if they were zoned for another school. Hawkins said that this was one of the best

Liberal Arts Academy (LAA) opens at Johnston HS. The LAA functioned as a humanities-centric counterpart to the Science Academy, and had a similar setup, sharing electives, the Ram mascot and sports with Johnston students.

1990 SA graduate Sarah Ethridge said that the more diverse student body afforded by integration gave students the opportunity to interact with a variety of students from all different ethnicities, races, and socioeconomic levels, something she believes was positive for individuals on both ends and especially in avoiding resentment between the merging communities.

"[The integrated school] removes the elitism of a 'smarter' school (and in this case, whiter)," Ethridge said. "It allows kids coming from typically white, privileged neighborhoods to experience other socio-economic groups, to have a broader understanding of the world, issues that their peers may face that they have never had to think of. On the opposite side, I think that it provides a view of a world to strive for in the disadvantaged communities — and provides goals and examples to compete against. [Everyone] felt unified in trying to make LBJ the best in ALL areas — athletics, band, drill team, debate, science competitions, general academics."

In light of the continued debates over LASA's possible relocation, each of the three SA alumni said their experiences allowed by the unified school were something that current students of LASA and LBJ should be able to share as well.

"LBJ gave students the opportunity to really see the world," Hawkins said. "The world was in the classroom with us every day — every culture, every creed, every religion, every language, every socioeconomic status. Because of that, we learned to think differently, to empathize, to understand and respect different opinions and ways of life."

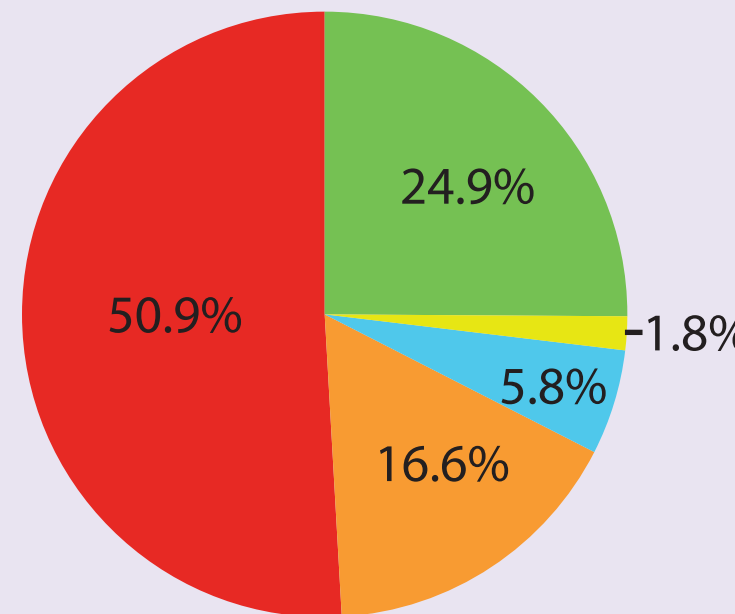
2002

The LBJ Science Academy and Liberal Arts Academy merge, becoming the Liberal Arts and Science Academy (LASA), housed on the Lyndon Baines Johnson High School campus.

LASA RELOCATION

The Liberator surveyed 130 LASA students, 8 LBJ students and 3 alumni about their views on LASA's planned relocation off of the LBJ campus and the relationship between our two schools. Here's what we found:

- 7-9 friends
- 1-3 friends
- 0 friends
- 4-6 friends
- 10+ friends

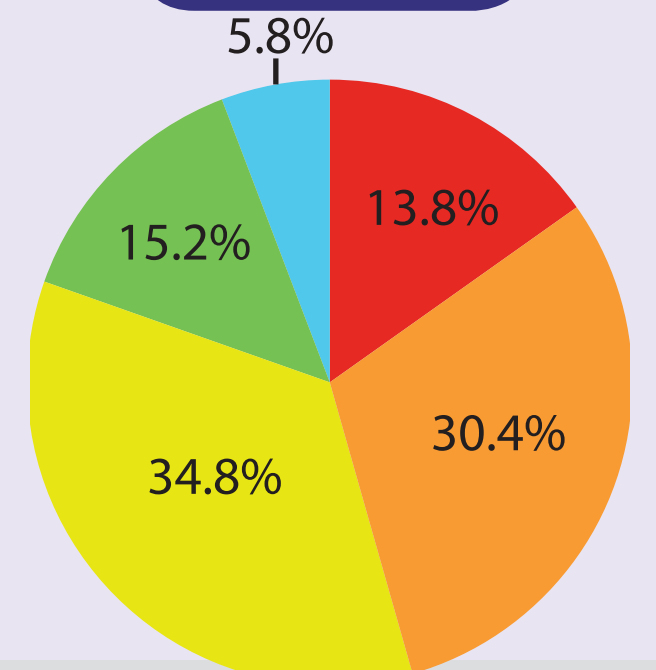


Of 139 students who answered, just over half said they have no friends at the other school. Less than a third have more than five friends who attend the other school. graphic by Kye Fisher

Please note that due to the low response rate, these statistics may not be representative of the population, and the experience of all students cannot be assumed based on this sample.

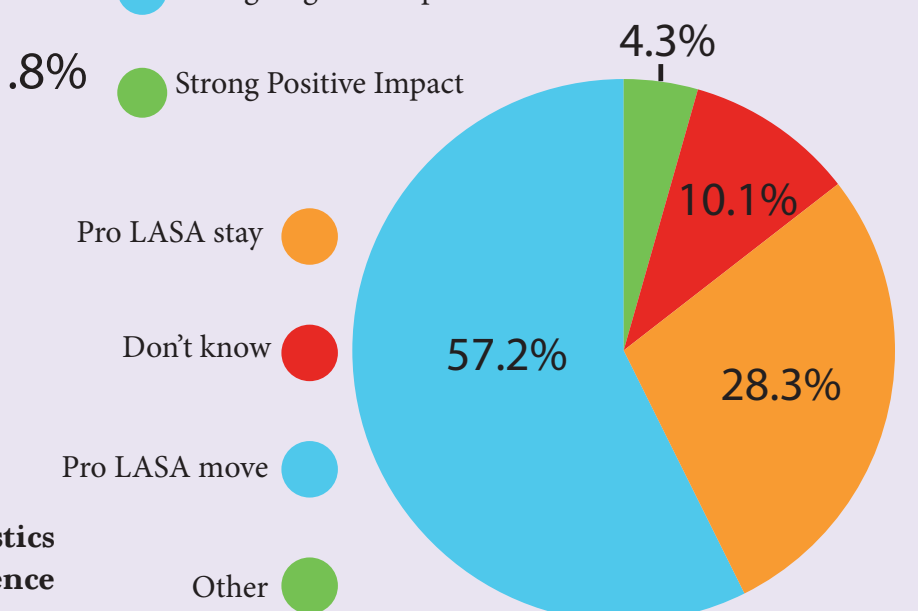
designed by Meena Anderson, Sarah Lucas and Clara Morse

2017



LASA and LBJ are aligning their schedules next year, both starting at 8:30 a.m. Nearly half of the survey takers said that this would have a positive impact upon their high school experience, with 15 percent saying it would impact them "very" positively. Under 20 percent said it would impact them negatively. graphic by Kye Fisher.

- Neutral
- Somewhat Positive Impact
- Somewhat Negative Impact
- Strong Negative Impact
- Strong Positive Impact
- Pro LASA stay
- Don't know
- Pro LASA move
- Other



More than half of survey takers favor the LASA move, while just over one fourth favor LASA staying on the LBJ campus. The rest of the students were undecided or preferred another option. graphic by Kye Fisher

Model students design their futures

LASA seniors majoring in fashion and design reveal the insight into their collegiate decision

TALIA WILCOTT
Staff Writer

College is an important milestone in a person's life, personally and professionally. Most students dedicate their time in college on one or two set things that they want to major in so they can make a career out of it and all students have different interests. These three LASA students have found which colleges are best for them and their shared passion for design.

According to senior Aidan Henderson, she has always had an interest in fashion design. Henderson has decided to go to University of Texas in Austin because their range of networks and internships in fashion was more promising for her than any other.

"They have opportunities like interning with high-fashion companies and being able to work on runways at New York fashion week," Henderson said.

According to Henderson, she has done more than observed the opportunities offered by UT, she has a plan for herself.

"I'm hoping to study abroad at the University of Sydney for a semester and get an internship in New York/LA during one of the summers or semesters," Henderson said. "I'm also hoping to minor/double major in sustainability because sustainable textiles really interest me."

UT's textiles program offers specialties within the field, including courses from design to business that are available for all majors to take.

"I specialize in textiles which is basically what I'm doing in college, but I'm more so focusing on the business/product development side of the business rather than designing the textiles themselves," Henderson said.

According to Henderson, the University of Texas was not the only college that offered fields of study that subscribed to Henderson's interests.

"I was also looking at the University of British Columbia Vancouver where I would have studied Environmental Design and NC State where I would've studied the same thing as I'm studying at UT," Henderson said.

The University of Texas in Austin has a tuition of \$10,000, a deciding factor according to Henderson.

"UT is a lot cheaper, and since you pay the same amount of tuition for studying abroad, I can study abroad for the same price as going to UT so I felt like that was a really good opportunity," Henderson said.

According to Henderson, college is only one stepping stone in her fashion future.

"I'm hoping to be able to find a job where I can be both hands-on with the creation and design of products but also play a role in the marketing/management aspects," Henderson said. "I also might go to grad school for

environmental design/architecture and my college high school art education would help me in both of those fields."

Henderson isn't the only student at LASA who intends to go to college for fashion. According to senior Parker Losefsky, he is intending to use his college career to further his fashion portfolio as well. After many visits to a multitude of colleges, Losefsky settled on the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT).

"I'm going to FIT because I was really impressed with the program when I visited the college. It actually wasn't my top choice until I visited in October," Losefsky said.

According to Losefsky, the entirety of fashion is fascinating, but he has decided on a more narrow and specific path for college.

"I'm going into the fashion business program but my end goal is the cosmetics merchandising and management program offered to upperclassmen," Losefsky said.

Losefsky said FIT was not the only college he looked at; he had many more options in his mind. His final choice was made when he visited the FIT college campus in October.

"Initially, I was looking at Savannah College of Arts and Design [SCAD] and Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in Los Angeles [FIDM]. FIDM was my top choice initially because they offer a beauty merchandising and marketing program," Losefsky said. "SCAD was my other choice because they offer a production design program that I was kind of interested in, as well as an amazing study abroad program, but I was never seriously considering SCAD."

Out of all the colleges, Losefsky feels like FIT offered him the most.

According to Losefsky, FIT was the college that fit his needs the most.

"The college has really good connections in the fashion industry so internships are definitely going to be something I look into," Losefsky said. "On top of that I think that New York is a really good city for me and what I want

to do."

College is also a good chance for students to immerse themselves in the field of their choice, in Losefsky's case fashion.

"I think that the most valuable part of my college experience will be the connections I make with not only corporate fashion giants, but the young creative people who are going to be the next generation running the fashion world," said Losefsky. "The main thing that appealed to me about FIT was how ingrained it was into the fashion and beauty scene in New York."

Along with Henderson and Losefsky, senior Haley Thompson plans to go to college for design as well.

Thompson has decided to go to University of Colorado Boulder. The University of Colorado Boulder offers many programs to students in all fields, but most students admire the opportunities the college offers outside of the classroom.

"I plan to search for internships pretty soon into college, because design in one of those fields that you really need hands on experience for," said Thompson.

The college offers many courses for design majors, all of which include a range of studies, new and old.

"It's really hard to find a college that has a design program that incorporates both classic design and the new, innovative technologies that are crucial to making it applicable in modern day" said Thompson.

According to Henderson, Losefsky, Parker and Thompson, they are excited to gain experience throughout their college experience that they can utilize in their future.

"I am anxious about starting a life for myself without the help of my family, but I am really excited about college and what will come after," Henderson said.

graphic by Grace Bodine



Lil Uzi Vert performs at the 2017 JMBLYA festival. Photo courtesy of Ashley Thomas.

JMBLYA in Austin

OSCAR HERNANDEZ
Staff Writer

It was crowded, and a sea of people had their hands up, pushing and shoving each other as the acts played on. Smoke and the emphatic noise of the rapping filled the air as phone screens flashed. Hosted by ScoreMore Shows, a promotional agency known for hosting big events and parties, the JMBLYA music festival took place on May 6 at the Circuit of the Americas parking lot. This was JMBLYA's first time solely in Austin, although it has been held in other Texan cities during previous years. With headliners Chance the Rapper and Gucci Mane, over 27,000 people bought tickets to go this year. Junior Holden Hunter, who attended the festival, compared JMBLYA to the Austin City Limits Music Festival (ACL).

"It's a music festival in the park of the circuit of the Americas, it's kind of like an Austin City Limits but like smaller version," Hunter said. "People can go and listen to artists and stuff they hear online, in person."

Presenting 11 acts over the course of one day, JMBLYA is a relatively new festival to the Austin area. In 2016, JMBLYA was held in both Dallas and Austin over two weekends. Headliners from last year included Future, Rae Sremmurd, and Carnage. According to Laney Phillips, she had heard that the previous year wasn't very good.

"I heard that it was really bad last year," Phillips said before the festival took place. "The people that are going this year should be better so I think it'll be fun."

In a city such as Austin with a vibrant music scene, many festivals are held over the year. 450,000 people attended ACL last year, attracting other festivals such as JMBLYA to try and establish a presence in Austin. According to junior Louis Rivera, JMBLYA is something that should be revisited over the years, but has a few issues.

"Well, I feel like it's our sworn duty as Austinites to go to as many music festivals and concerts as possible," Louis said. "I know it's gonna be hot, it's gonna be crowded, but it's gonna be a lot of fun."

Circuit of the Americas sponsors dozens of concerts, as well as the Formula

One track and the X Games each year. According to many concert goers, including junior Dylan Cox, the parking lot location of the festival and the amount of people who attended resulted in a very crowded event.

"The atmosphere was alright when the shows were going," Cox said. "When they weren't it was a lot of pushing and shoving, but during the actual concerts it seemed like everyone was really involved in the music."

Chance the Rapper headlined the festival and was the only act who brought out a band as opposed to DJs. According to Cox, Chance was one of the most enjoyable acts present at JMBLYA.

"He was probably the best performer out of everyone there," Cox said. "He definitely seemed like he was the most connected with the crowd and tried to get us the most involved in singing the hooks and stuff like that. He talked to us in between songs which was really cool, and we felt a lot more connected to him than the other artists."

One issue that came about because of the size of the event was that the festival ran out of water. According to junior Antoine Denis, this was an issue that caused some discomfort.

"There weren't as many aggressive people as ACL but they ran out of water in the first 30 minutes that we were there," Denis said. "So everyone was dehydrated and dying but it was good."

According to Denis, despite these issues and the problem of over-crowdedness, JMBLYA was a good experience and should be recommended to many.

"It was definitely worth it. I wasn't gonna go at first but it's just, the performances were great," Denis said. "If you are thinking about going next year and there's a good lineup, you should definitely go."

JMBLYA is set to return to Austin in 2018. According to Cox, the issues involved during the festival's Austin premiere were overshadowed by the festival's spirit.

"Migos, Lil Uzi Vert, and Chance were all really, really entertaining," Cox said. "And even though it was really hot and they didn't have enough water for a lot of it, those shows really made up for it just from the energy they brought and the energy of the crowd."

GAHSMTA for LASA

SARAH MINES
Staff Writer

The Long Center was packed with teens dressed in gowns and dresses and the stage was alive with show tunes and dance numbers. Once a year, nominated theater programs from around the Austin area gather to celebrate their love for theater at the Greater Austin High School Musical Theater Awards, or the GAHSMTAs. For this year's GAHSMTAs, LASA senior Isabelle Dickey was nominated for Lead Actress and the spring musical, "Nice Work If You Can Get It," was nominated for Best Technical Execution, Best Actress in a Leading Role and won for Best Orchestra. Melissa Alexander-Driscoll, LASA theater teacher, says that this year's orchestra win was extra special because they have been nominated every year before, but have never won until now.

"It's always an honor to get the nominations that we do and to see that the judges are giving awards to what stands out to them, just because our community is so used to what we do," Alexander-Driscoll said. "For [the orchestra] to give that time for most of January, and for a lot of them year after year, is amazing. It was really awesome to finally get a win and I

Alexander-Driscoll chose two participants from the spring musical to take part in the finale of the awards show. Both participants, junior Erick Medina and sophomore Ellis Prater-Burgess, said that performing in the finale is a great opportunity to get to know musical theater students from other schools.

"We've been rehearsing for a month now, and the finale will be a really big number composed of people from multiple schools," Medina said the afternoon before the show. "There will be lots of dancing and singing and we end the show with a big spectacle. Practice has been great, it's a lot of dancing and it's really fast paced because we have a limited amount of time to do the show. I am pumped for the show because we sold out the whole entire theater, so it'll be a full house, but I'm ready for it."

Dickey will continue in theater this coming fall at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York. Although she will be pursuing theater instead of musical theater, Dickey believes that this will give her a more well-rounded training.

"While that wasn't my original plan, I actually think that's going to be better because I'll still be able to take dance, I'll still be able to take voice, and acting is kind of the base

It's really exciting because you get close with the other people who are apart of it and you get to perform in front of all of these people.

-LASA senior Isabelle Dickey

think that it was not only a shock but also just a really great feeling."

For Isabelle Dickey, LASA senior and GAHSMTA Lead Actress nominee, GAHSMTA is a fun event that brings musical theater programs from Austin and the greater area together.

"Some other big cities in Texas like Dallas and Houston have done it, and so Ginger Morris, the woman who started this, went and looked at other cities and how they did theirs and started one for Austin," Dickey said. "It started off significantly smaller, but this year there were 31 schools participating. They aren't just schools in AISD either, private schools like St. Stephen's and St. Andrews are in it too. There are schools from Leander, Marble Falls, Vista Ridge and Round Rock"

Lead Actress nominees are invited to perform in a mash-up of the songs from each of their shows. The eight girls nominated spend months learning the choreography and song for the April 13th performance during the show.

"We all get to sing parts of other people's character's songs and do some dancing," Dickey said. "[My character], Billie Bendix is like this bootlegger in the 1920s. She's really tough and dresses generally dresses in more guy clothing and has no interest in falling in love. She meets this goofy and empty-headed playboy guy and through a comedy of errors they end up falling in love. In the end I think we were all not as nervous and excited for the awards, but more so for the medley and making sure that it comes together."

of musical theater, so it feels like the most important skill to hone anyway." Dickey said. "Plus, a nice thing about Ithaca is that their theater and musical theater programs work really tightly, so hopefully I'll still be able to do some musicals and I'll still definitely get to audition."

In addition to being nominated and participating in the Lead Actress Nominee ensemble, Dickey was chosen to participate in the select ensemble for the show. Individuals audition for the selective group months beforehand in hopes of performing a musical number in the show.

"I was so excited for the show because I wasn't just nominated, I was also part of the select ensemble which students from all over Austin audition to be part of," Dickey said. "We get to perform the opening number and then we do a fifteen minute medley at the end of act one. I've been really looking forward to this because I've been working on this for most of the year and I also did select ensemble last year. It's really exciting because you get close with the other people who are a part of it and you get to perform in front of all of these people."

After the show, Erick Medina said that participating in GAHSMTA was one of his favorite experiences from high school theater and he enjoyed performing in front of the sold-out theater.

"I'm so thankful to be able to do theater and to have opportunities like this. It's so cool that LASA has a theater program that does such great shows and I can't wait for what we'll do in the future."

Status Loco goes loco for live shows

GABRIELLE JABOUR
Staff Writer

As a steady beat pulses around the room, the sounds of a guitar riff and drum echo in listener's ears. To outsiders, the noise may sound like nothing more than clashing instruments, but inside the practice, the creation of new music is underway.

For alternative rock band Status Loco, music isn't just simply recording and releasing songs—it's a learning and growing experience. The band, which started in Fall 2015, is composed of three LASA students: junior Avi Hurewitz, lead vocalist and rhythm guitarist; sophomore Jason Brady on drums and piano; and junior lead guitarist Nate Culbert, as well as McCallum bassist and backup vocalist, Matan Benyamin. Currently, the band is working on writing and preparing for upcoming gigs, including this year's Coffeehouse.

"We had the idea to make [the band] in the end of our freshman year, but the beginning of my sophomore year Jason Brady, myself, Cade Foster and Jongwook Mah formed the band," Hurewitz said. "It was a group effort. I just made a list of band names and then we modified it to get Status Loco and I liked the way it sounded."

Brady said that when Status Loco was first starting out, the process of establishing the band and learning to work with the other group members was difficult.

"For our first practice, we chose songs that were more difficult than they appeared, and we were all under prepared," Brady said. "We didn't think that we would have to practice practicing as a group. But the next week, we chose easier songs, and began to build morale as we got better at our parts, and better at playing together."

According to lead guitarist Nate Culbert, the band prides itself in the diversity of their sound and writing process, which aims to include a variety of genres.

"We try to incorporate a bunch of different styles into our music—we have funk, we have punk, we have rock, and we try to blend it all together," Culbert said. "I think that's what makes us unique: our ability to try everything, and synthesize them down into something we can work with."

This year, the band is focusing on perfecting their set list of originals for live performances and are seeking out gigs to play. Most of Status Loco's songs aren't being released until they are played live, but the band has posted some of their music to SoundCloud. They performed their song "Twitching and Itching" at LASA's 2017 Coffeehouse.

"It's definitely ramped up this year," Hurewitz said. "Last year we had one original that we wrote and we

worked on a lot of covers, but this year we've written a lot of originals and have been practicing a lot. We were planning an EP... but that's more in the future. Now, we're focusing on getting gigs."

At a typical practice, the band rehearses the songs and covers they have been working on and practices running through their performance setlist to nail down any imperfections. They also hold group discussions to write and brainstorm about new song ideas and to sort through housekeeping tasks such as planning for recordings and band outreach.

"A good amount of practice time is group collaboration," Culbert said. "Overall, we fit practicing old songs and writing new ones into three jam-packed hours. We all contribute to the process of writing music, which can be frustrating, but is so rewarding when you finish it. Then, there's the more technical side of things, as in getting in touch with music venues in order to inquire about gigs. We've just started doing this recently, and this will ramp

up pretty soon as we polish some stuff we've been working on and prepare to play our first shows."

In addition to Brady's role in Status Loco, he also plays trumpet for the LBJ marching and symphonic band.

According to Brady,

his experience in the band program at LBJ has been an entirely different experience than playing in Status Loco. He credits some of the difference between school band and Status Loco to the amount of creative freedom in each setting and the skill and number of the respective members, such as the small group setting of Status Loco which allows the band to learn pieces quicker and more efficiently.

"In [LBJ] band, we work on a few pieces for months and months, just because of their complexity, and precision required in every one of the 40 or so members to play it well," Brady said. "Status Loco is a much more relaxed and creative music environment. For one, being in a band means setting your own goals. For every practice [we] have to come up with a list of things to get done, a list of ideas to contribute for each song and a list of ideas for new songs."

Due to the large time commitment and fast pace of the music industry, many bands attribute simply staying together and consistently practicing as a feat in itself. According to Culbert, who has been a member of the band for seven months, the experience of creating and experiencing art in different ways alongside the other

members of the group has been extremely rewarding and gratifying.

"I love working with the guys in the band because they're all so talented and open to any musical idea that's thrown out, which is priceless in a band," Culbert said. "We have material that's ready to go, and others that are in the works, and it's really cool to have all these ideas swimming around between the members of the band and knowing that we're on the way to making a great library of music. The combination of the companionship and the music we're creating by ourselves makes being a member of Status Loco so, so awesome."



Photo courtesy of Status Loco.



Above left to right: Avi Hurewitz (junior), rhythm guitar and lead vocalist; Nate Culbert (junior), lead guitar; Matan Benyamin (McCallum junior), bassist and backup vocals; Jason Brady (sophomore) drums and piano. Photo courtesy of Status Loco.

“They’re all so talented and open to any musical idea that’s thrown out, which is priceless in a band.”
-LASA junior Nate Culbert

The albums students will be boppin' to this summer

AMANDA PHARES
Staff Writer

The sun is shining, casting golden rays across the sea of green grass that is Zilker Park. Blankets and towels lay out in large numbers, speckling the ground on a summer day in Austin. Beside almost every blanket lies a music maker: a phone, a speaker, maybe even a boom box. Music twists through the balmy air, and can be heard almost at any given point, differing depending on the player.

Every year, new music comes out in June and July, and every year, there is undoubtedly an album that makes the summer. According to junior Dylan Cox, there are a few requirements for what actually makes a good summer album.

"I look for airy, spacey production with similarly chill vocals or bangers with lots of bass and trap influences," Cox said. "Basically both moods of the summer: relaxation and turnt."

According to freshman Cora Tien, while chilled out lyrics and a nice vibe are something to look for, upbeat dance songs are also equally as important if you like having fun.

"For the most part I like summer albums to be fun alternative music or R&B rap music because they put me in a happy and energetic mood," Tien said. "When I try to find new summer music, the qualities I look for are catchy songs and a beat I can dance to."

A harmonious mix of dance music and vibey songs has always been a summer go-to for senior Seamus Quinn.

"Perfect summer albums have always been upbeat and fun, and have the perfect mix of songs to chill to and lose your mind to," said Quinn. "Coloring Book [by Chance the Rapper] is a perfect example, and is the soundtrack playing behind all my memories from last summer."

With the summer months approaching and school coming to a close, new albums from many different genres are set to come out. Senior Abbe Kelley speaks fondly of one of her favorite artists, Lorde, and her upcoming album.

"I'm super excited about Lorde's new album because I've been waiting for her to drop another one forever," Kelley said. "After hearing her new single 'Greenlight,' I think this new album sounds pretty promising."

Other artists such as sophomore Nick Venn's favorite band, The Shins, assure the arrival of new music for the summer as well.

"The Shins promised an album to come out in 2017 and I'm really excited about that," Venn said. "I grew up listening to The Shins and listening to them evolve and put out new music is always so exciting, especially for the summer."

According to junior Laney Phillips, with all the new music due to drop this summer, the album of the summer will be Drake's album "More Life."

"There's a lot of chill songs on ['More Life'] like 'Passionfruit' and '4422' which are chill but have catchy beats, and also hype songs on it like 'Gyalchester' which you could definitely turn up to," Phillips said. "Drake is pretty universally liked too so I definitely think his new music will take the title for the album of the summer."

While Drake's recently released album has garnered a lot of attention according to Tien regarding her friends, she is quick to mention "More Life" might be seriously rivaled by another rap artist. According to the New York Times, Kendrick Lamar's new album "DAMN." had the biggest debut of 2017 opening at number one on the Billboard album chart.

"The album of the summer will probably be 'DAMN.' by Kendrick Lamar, and because it came out already, people will have time to get familiar with the album by the time June and July come," Tien said. "It has a lot of different moods in the album, ranging from more melancholy and reflective to hype and exciting, which is perfect for summer."

According to Quinn, with all the new music coming out for the summer, it's difficult to narrow it down to the best album, but ultimately what's important is that you love the music.

"A perfect summer album makes your summer experience," Quinn said. "I'm excited to bump some new music this summer."



Graphics by Sarah Mines.

TOP 5 things to do before you graduate

CURRIE LARRIMER
Staff Writer

1 See LBJ beat McCallum in football
Nothing says Friday night lights like winning a rival game.

2 Cry in front of Mr. Kiker
Instead of doing your smartboard problem, curl up in a ball and break down like you've always wanted to.

3 Climb the band tower
Look upon your achievements with regret or enthusiasm.

4 Do not stress about a class
You're college ready and all packed up, why care anymore?

5 See Mr. Hernandez salsa dance
Stop by for some of his famous jewelry and maybe he'll reward you with a little dance.

Robotics at worlds

continued from page 1

"Another way to qualify for Worlds, which is how we initially expected to qualify, is by being in the winning alliance at a regional competition or by being the captain of the losing alliance in the finals at a regional competition," Gitre said. "We came close in both of our regionals, but had a bad run in the quarterfinals each time. Luckily, our Chairman's presentation team worked really hard and won us a spot at Worlds that way."

LASA sophomore and programmer Zayan Vohra had high hopes as he enthusiastically anticipated his first Worlds competition. He was not intimidated by the success of LASA in previous years, and said the team was going to give it their all to advance as far as possible.

"I'm really excited," Vohra said. "Qualifying

make sure that the team has designs which are realistic based on the resources available at LASA, and hopes that the team realizes success is attainable through hard work. This is the LASA team's 18th year participating in FIRST competitions, but the team has never made it to the final level of the competition called "Einstein". Bertucci says that the team lost because of factors which were out of their control, like when the alliance captain that picked the team failed to climb, which resulted in a substantial loss of points. He still was amazed by the team's accomplishments and effort at the competition.

"Going into our third round we discovered we had exploded a bearing in our transmission, and you only get a six minute timeout," Bertucci said. "In six minutes they were able to take off the bumper, take off the wheel, disassemble the transmission, knockout the old bearing, put in a new

I love robotics because it is a perfect combination of engineering, team work and power tools. Worlds... was an experience that I will cherish for the rest of my life.

-LASA sophomore Zayan Vohra

for Worlds is a big achievement. ... I'm really hyped to go to Houston, knowing that we have a good enough presentation and the fact that we're doing the outreach to qualify for Worlds is a really important thing for me. I love robotics, and I spend a lot of time with the team, so the fact that we qualified for Worlds makes me so incredibly excited."

LASA's best past performance at Worlds was reaching the semifinals, and the team ended up making it to the quarterfinals in their division this year. Gitre says that the robot was built to fit the needs of the team and was required to meet the specifications of the game manual which was released in January.

"The challenge this year essentially involved running comically large, plastic gears across the field, shooting medium sized wiffle balls into a goal and climbing a rope in the last 30 seconds of the challenge," Gitre said. "Games are played with a red and blue alliance, each with three robots from three different schools, who are all trying to score the most points possible. From there, whichever alliance scores the most points wins and earns a few ranking points. By the end of qualification matches, everyone is ranked based on the number of wins and losses, and the top eight teams get to pick who is on their alliance."

LASA robotics coach Anthony Bertucci has dedicated 23 years to coaching the team, has attended roughly ten Worlds competitions, and believes that the robotics program provides opportunities for kids that are not possible in the classroom. He has to

bearing, reassemble everything, and they got back on the field with 30 seconds to spare... I mean they looked like a NASCAR team. So that's really a great accomplishment because a lot of these guys when they got here as freshman, they really didn't know the difference between a screwdriver and a piano."

This efficiency was a result of many hours of work. Practice happened after school until six every Monday through Thursday, and also on Saturday mornings. The team of roughly twenty members prepared for competition all year, with different members having different responsibilities including designers, builders, programmers, electronics, presenters and device operators. This time was dedicated to manufacturing, designing, coding and assembling/operating the robot. After a certain amount of time the team reached "Bag Day" where they were no longer allowed to modify their robot until they reached the competition, but the LASA team looked ahead and built a practice robot to plan out future modifications. Vohra is appreciative of the opportunities provided through his participation in the LASA Robotics program, and loved his experience at Worlds.

"I love robotics because it is a perfect combination of engineering, team work and power tools," Vohra said. "Worlds was a strong effort by the whole team, and we wouldn't have made it without the synergy we have developed through our many hours spent together. It was an experience that I will cherish for the rest of my life."



LASA senior Madeline Lee enjoys spending time playing softball with campers at Camp CAMP. photo courtesy of Madeline Lee

Lend a helping hand LASA students work with disabled children as camp CAMP counselors

MARLEN AVILA
Staff Writer

The sun pans across the field and multitudes of campers gaze towards the changing colors of the sky. The campers chat idly and laughs are exchanged between them. In the summer, so many campers are gathered to do archery, arts and crafts, canoeing, and more. Here at Camp CAMP, LASA sophomore Sarah Chieng expresses how appreciative she is of her involvement with the campers.

"Volunteering at Camp CAMP is crazy fun," Chieng said. "You get to become best friends with your camper and the other counselors. I bonded so much with the campers and the other counselors and you build a great community. You never feel alone and your friends are next to you to help you if you ever need any."

Camp CAMP stands for Children's Association for Maximum Potential which focuses on creating a safe and friendly environment for disabled children. Located at Center Point, high school students can volunteer over breaks to become counselors. From there, the volunteers are responsible for caring for their assigned camper and participate in summer activities with each other while providing their necessary needs. Chieng began volunteering there since last summer and believes that camp has offered her the opportunity to explore a world that she wasn't familiar with before.

"Before Camp CAMP, I didn't really interact with challenged persons very much and Camp CAMP completely changed my perspective," Chieng said. "The most amazing thing for me was how quickly I forgot that the campers were any different from me or the other counselors. The campers have the most wonderful and sweetest personalities and are among the nicest people I have ever met."

After being involved with CAMP, Chieng gained motivation to continually volunteer because she believed that one of the most important things to do is to give back to the community and CAMP provided the perfect opportunity for her. Another volunteer, LASA senior Madeline Lee shares the same passion and enthusiasm about CAMP. Like Chieng, she has learned many valuable lessons from her experiences at CAMP.

"It changes your whole life," Lee said. "You learn so much about disabilities and being more accepting [to] not only to people with disabilities but to others who are different from you. You become more patient in situations. You learn that everyone is different and amazing in their own way. You learn more about disabilities, about yourself and about the world."

According to Chieng, she initially began volunteering after wanting to broaden her view of the world and wanting to understand more groups of people. In addition to getting the opportunity to on-hand learn about disabilities, Lee said that people who had no prior experience with disabled people are encouraged to volunteer as well.

"Camp CAMP is for pretty much anybody who doesn't have experiences that close with people who have disabilities and I still learn today more and more about disabilities," Lee said. "So you think that [they] can't do as much as us but in the end, I've learned so much more from them about life and about everything. People really tried to understand and try to learn from them. So I've learned how not everyone thinks and do what I want to do and be happy with what I've been given."

Chieng and Lee said that they haven't regretted volunteering at CAMP because they have learned so much and have a more positive perspective on the capabilities of what people can do. After volunteering at CAMP for the past several years, Lee became very passionate about striving to make a dramatic change how disabilities are viewed in the world.

"To help people with disabilities, to become more independent and show the world just because people are disabled doesn't mean that they are not able," Lee said. "If it wasn't for camp, then I probably wouldn't be on this route to [becoming] a biomedical engineer and I'm excited for the future."

Student farming group feeds Austin through service

ELENA VENEGONI
Staff Writer

A group of teenage interns from different schools and neighborhoods in Austin stand under the hot sun, working and tending to a three and a half acre farm. They pick figs and other fruits and vegetables and work together, getting to know one another. One of these interns is LASA sophomore Nadia Freeman, who dedicates parts of her week to working at Urban Roots: a farming program in Austin that offers opportunities for youth involvement and internships.

Freeman first began working at Urban Roots in the summer after her freshman year. She was inspired to apply to be an intern at Urban Roots after hearing only positive things about it from a peer.

"I have a friend who was a part of Urban Roots during my freshman year at McCallum, and everyday in art class she would say she was going to work and she would never ever act like she was dreading it," Freeman said.

After a thorough application process that involved answering essay questions and going through an interview session, Freeman was hired. She first began working in the 2016 summer season, the summer before her first year at LASA.

"When I started the Urban Roots program, I was what we call a 'first year intern' meaning I had never been through the program before," Freeman said.

"Now, after going through the summer internship and the fall internship, each of which have a different focus, I was promoted to the role of Assistant Crew Leader."

LASA junior Olivia Dudley also has past experience with the Urban Roots youth program. She worked there for over a year from January 2015 to July 2016. Like Freeman, she was originally hired as a first year intern before assuming a leadership role.

"My second year I was

promoted to Assistant Crew Leader, meaning I co-lead eight youth interns in farm work, leadership workshops and running the farmers market stand," Dudley said.

While Freeman said she has found her job at Urban Roots fun and meaningful, she admits that the time commitment and responsibilities that come along with it can be difficult to manage for some people. She adds that the right attitude is essential to successful participation in the program.

"The hardest part of my job is showing up," Freeman said. "Not just getting to work everyday, but getting there on time, ready to go and with the right attitude. Even when it's a million degrees outside we have to get the work done.... Even if you're tired, even if you're hot, even if you're stressed, you have to show up."

The program teaches the participants the broad range of skills necessary to run a farm. However, according to Ian Hunter-Crawford, the Programs and

Operations Director at Urban Roots, that is not the main goal of the organization.

"The main purpose of this program is to bring young people together to do service, growing and donating food, so that in the process they grow as leaders and build life and professional skills," Hunter-Crawford said. "The goal is not to create future farmers, but instead, to use the experience of growing food as a unique and powerful tool for young people to become empowered leaders."



While the main focus of the program directors may not be to produce future farmers, Freeman said she is welcome to the and that she could see herself pursuing the profession in the future. "Everyone always asks us interns if we want to be farmers when we grow up," Freeman said. "Most of my co-workers say no, but I say yes. Nothing sounds better to me than spending my days outside, helping plants help hungry people."

graphics by Riley Murphy

Changing the lives of children through theatre

SOPHIE WYSOCKI
Staff Writer

A large ensemble of teenagers from all across the Austin area gather together on stage, reciting lines they had written together the previous semester. Scenes portraying lessons on gender roles, domestic violence, privilege and consent echo across rooms full of children. Sophomore Clara Gibbs is one of the actors in the Changing Lives Theatre Ensemble and works alongside others to write 40 minute plays on topics important to them.

"It's my second year being a part of the Changing Lives Youth Theatre Ensemble," Gibbs said. "Changing Lives has become so incredibly important to me in the last two years because of the connections I've made while being a part of it."

Before jumping in and creating the plays, Gibbs and her peers watch plays at local theatres and attend UT classes that discuss these subjects in the fall semester so that their plays are both engaging and informational. After performing at different locations, they open up the floor for questions from the audience. This way, they can process the lessons out loud to make a more lasting impression in their minds.

"We always have about 20 to 30 minutes for Q&A after the play just in case kids have more questions," Gibbs said. "This is usually the first exposure kids are getting to these lessons so it's a really crucial time to be able to talk through what they saw at the end of the play."

Gibbs auditioned for the group the summer before her freshman year at LASA and was nervous before coming in for the first time. While she was intrigued by the premise of the group, she didn't know exactly what it would be like, especially because she wouldn't be familiar with anybody there.

"I was super reluctant because I didn't know anyone there and no one was going to LASA that was auditioning," Gibbs said. "Right when I auditioned, I made new friends that I never would have met if it wasn't for Changing Lives. When I got a callback for it I was super excited to get to meet up with the people I met at the initial auditions."

In addition to enjoying meeting new people, she said that she also gets a thrill out of performing. Although being in front of other kids is a little scary for her, Gibbs thoroughly enjoys making an impact on others through performance.

"Obviously performing in front of middle schoolers is kind of nerve wracking because sometimes they just don't pay attention," Gibbs said. "I do it for the handful of five to 15 kids that come up to me after the play saying how much they relate to a character in our play or how much they appreciate us coming to teach their peers. It makes all the later rehearsal nights worth it when a student comes up to you sobbing saying how much they appreciate you being there."

Along with her passion for performing arts, seeing the

effect of the group's work on local children is really what she said keeps her motivated to continue. Because of the enjoyment she feels while doing this work, she said that she thinks that this may turn into a career path for her.

"I really hope that I can take what I have learned from this ensemble and continue to teach people about these lessons who wouldn't otherwise hear about them," Gibbs said. "I want to keep studying gender roles, privilege and domestic violence in college and then teach or raise awareness for it for a career."

Subjects such as consent and privilege are incredibly important to Gibbs and she said performing these plays have allowed her to learn things she hadn't considered in the past. According to Gibbs, everyone should receive this type of education regardless of socioeconomic situation or other lifestyle factors.

"I strongly believe that lessons about domestic violence and consent and gender roles should be taught at school," Gibbs said. "Since they can't, Changing Lives has been the closest I can get to that. I can really see that my ensemble is making a difference at the schools and community centers. Even if we are just changing a few kids' minds about how they see people or relationships, it's worth it to me."



Softball close in the playoffs

TREVOR ANDERSON
Staff Writer

Progress comes at a price. For the LBJ Lady Jags softball team, that price is countless days in the hot sun during practice. However, their sacrifices have not been in vain, and according to Head Coach Peter Moreno, every member of the program is committed to improving the program day in and day out, no matter what stands in their way. The Lady Jags made the playoffs this year, and Moreno thought the team played well in the first game of the playoffs against Dripping Springs, even though they lost.

"[The game] was definitely not easy, but I think if we clean up the small things, the big things will take care of themselves," Moreno said. "We are a competitive, motivated team; we just have to prove it, and you can be sure we will next season."

According to Moreno, the small things have been a problem for the Lady Jags this season, especially in the games against McCallum. Those games didn't help the Lady Jags record, but he plans to focus more on those things in the and next season to push the team past a 5-6 record.

"We lost both games to McCallum unfortunately, and a few small mistakes ended up costing us those games," Moreno said. "In practice right now, and going into next season, we are focusing on fixing the small things and cleaning up our act overall."

The team may be fighting an uphill battle in playoffs, Moreno and the rest of the team are committed and unified in their approach to each and every game. According to Moreno, the seniors are the backbone of the team, and in his opinion, they're very versatile and good mentors to the underclassmen.

"My biggest contributors right now are Ariel Hernandez, Deja Cain, and Maddie Lee," Moreno said. "They're all seniors, and they're pretty much been completely interchangeable; they can play anywhere on the field when we need them to, and that's been really useful. Deja and Ariel lead the team in batting averages, and they're committed to helping the younger girls whenever possible. They've contributed quite a bit and continue to prove themselves as leaders on and off the field."

Cain and Hernandez lead the team in batting average, with .676 and .688, respectively, and Cain hit six home runs over the course of the season. However, a team can only be as strong as its weakest link, and Moreno and the seniors agree that constant improvement is the best way the team can conduct practices and games. He said that for him, it's a main focus from day one.

"Every year, at the start of the season, I always stress that our goal is to improve as much as possible every day and do whatever you can to make the team better,"

Moreno said. "I make sure that we don't look the same on the field that we did at the beginning of the season. And the key in order for us to make playoffs and do well is to improve substantially enough on varsity that it looks like two different teams. I'm proud that everyone is committed to making varsity the best it can be."

The mentality of constant improvement is strengthened by the unity that the two teams have, according to Moreno. Even though the two teams practice separately, LASA freshman and LBJ softball player Audrey Heffernan says all of the players are very supportive of each other and aren't at all hesitant to help underclassmen when they need it.

"I've always been told I have unrealistically high expectations for myself, and when I let these get to me, I mess up and feel like I've failed," Heffernan said. "Fortunately, my teammates never fail to help me get back in the game and keep a short memory about my mistakes, something that I try to do with each of them. No one is perfect and mistakes are bound to occur, the important thing is how you recover."

LASA freshman and LBJ softball player Audrey Sandlin agrees. She believes that the atmosphere the players promote is productive and encourages participation with the newer players.

"If I'm having a bad game, it's a relief to know someone always has my back and no one will hold it against me," Sandlin said. "I feel like both teams are very supportive of each other and everyone wants to succeed."

Everyone on the team exhibits unwavering endurance, according to Moreno. He feels that this is imperative if the teams are to be more successful in future years.

"I like the resilience of the team too," Moreno said. "No one ever gives up. Every girl that goes out there is completely committed to the team, regardless of what happens. Whether we're winning by 10 or losing by 10, I'm happy that I can always count on these girls to give it everything they've got. There will be teams that are more talented or better funded, but no one will outwork us. It's always something that you enjoy as a coach, seeing kids that you know will never give up on you."

Overall, Moreno enjoyed coaching the girls this season, and he is proud of their effort and commitment. He believes that they have a lot of potential for future years, and thinks that the freshmen show a lot of potential for their future years.

"The best memory I've had this season was just seeing how the girls have improved, individually and as a team, how they've come together," Moreno said. "They've learned to work as a unit, and I enjoy seeing them recognize all the progress they've made and how it translates onto the field."



LASA Freshmen Vishwa Ardurur, Aarsal Farouq, Marcus Tita and Cormac Alonso play a game of spikeball during their lunch. photo courtesy of Marcus Tita

New hit sport on campus?

OSCAR HERNANDEZ & JEFFREY KOVAR
Staff Writers

Spikeball is a game which combines tennis without the racket into a vertical, circular net, in which teams of two go head to head in a game to 13. Through rain or shine, there will always will be some dedicated spikeballers outside with their nets, getting ready to ball-up. The spikeball community is an up and coming group with no actual coach or sponsor. Every lunch a large group, mostly comprised of freshmen, gets together and sets up their spikeball nets on the same spot they always place them: a big circle of dead grass marking their territory next to the Texas statue. Spikeball has never been a very popular or known sport, but these spikeballers say they are working hard to make it well-known, and according to LASA freshman Henry Chapin, anyone can play the game.

"As long as you have some hand-eye coordination and as long as you're kind of just at peace with yourself, then I think you can play," Chapin said. "Anyone can play."

A common misconception about spikeball is that it's a simple game, with nothing actually entertaining, enjoyable or challenging about it, while in reality, there is certain levels of athleticism and strategy required to be successful within the game. Many of the players are out there everyday and come from all sorts of different sports, like baseball or tennis, which emphasize skills that translate over to spikeball. LASA freshman Patrick Connor agrees with this, stating that the challenge aspect of the sport is his favorite part.

"I think the strategy and the movement makes it a really challenging sport," Connor said. "Which is really fun to play."

Spikeball challenges the player's hand eye coordination the most, according to LASA freshman Frank Milo. Players have to be able to react quickly to the ball being hit against the net. Milo had difficult time developing to the hand eye coordination with a background in soccer.

"Those guys they play tennis, they play baseball, so they picked it up like really easily," Milo said. "I played soccer, so it was a little bit harder to get used to hand-eye coordination."

Spikeball started as a small community, however it has added new people to their community each day. LASA freshman Marcus Tita had been there since two weeks into school, around the same time as Chapin, which was when the club first started. Chapin enjoys playing spikeball everyday because it gives him energy.

"Just you know, the flow and rhythm of it," Chapin said. "Every day, it kinda gives me some energy and just re-energizes my life."

The spikeball community is also very accepting and hopes to have more and more players join, accepting anyone who wants to be a spikeballer, no matter the skill level. Spikeball is not only easy to pick up, but the more and more you play, the better you will increase in skill over time. Milo says that making sure that you are having fun and enjoying yourself is the most important tip for beginners. "Don't worry about the rules, just play for fun at first," Milo said. "Make sure you're having fun and not getting worried."

Due to these spikeballers spreading the word of their sport all around school, this small group of students that started out with only a couple of kids has expanded to over 20 people playing outside all the time during their lunches. Tita talks about the growth he's seen occur in front of his eyes.

"That was two weeks into school, we only had one net at the time, so it wasn't like a lot of spikeball time," Tita said. "We've gradually evolved and now we have five nets."

With spikeball communities like this popping up everywhere, it could be the next big thing on campus and throughout the world.

"If [spikeball] did not exist, then I don't know what I would do," Chapin said. "My life might just be, it's a big part of my life so I don't know."



LBJ girls softball team together after a loss to Dripping Springs in the first round of playoffs on April 27. photo courtesy of Audrey Heffernan

Girls soccer ends a successful season

JORGE VILLA
Staff Writer

The sound of a sharp and high pitched whistle and the thud of soccer balls being kicked from one side of the pitch to the other is heard across the LBJ neighborhood. A drill enforced by LBJ girls soccer head coach Chloe Cardinale works to improve the trapping of the players. Like LBJ boys soccer head coach, Cipriano Martinez, Cardinale decided to continue implementing more conditioning in their practices to make sure that every player was in good shape to play. Cardinale said that she was happy to see actual results during their games which only motivated her to continue emphasizing conditioning in their practices next year.

"We had already changed this season practices to implement more conditioning because ironically, even though the girls play soccer, they hate to run," Cardinale said. "This season we structured the practices so that for half of the time it's conditioning and the other is actually practicing. We are definitely continue that next year because we did notice a difference in games because they had more stamina."

This season, Cardinale decided to keep coaching the LBJ girls soccer team because she enjoys working with girls who are hard workers and dedicate their time to a sport. She initially became the soccer coach four years ago when she heard that the LBJ girls soccer team needed a coach. In fact, she said that the main reason she decided to join was because she thought that hard working girls who play soccer deserve a good coach. After her first season being a soccer coach, she said she had a great time and was for sure going to come back and coach the soccer team again next year.

"It's fun, I do really have fun with them, the practices are fun, it's also fun to go out there and run around with them," Cardinale said. "It's really different from swimming which is an individual sport, it's fun to cheer on in a game at a team who is working together. It's just a different atmosphere and I truly enjoy it."

LASA sophomore and LBJ Soccer player Rachel Horowitz said that this has been her favorite season playing for the LBJ soccer team. This season she got to play a position that she doesn't normally play in her club team, which was forward. This allowed her to have the chance to finally score some goals for her team. Her favorite part of the season was beating McCallum in their first game of the season. After making it to the district playoffs, they were eliminated in the first round. Although, the girls LBJ soccer team made it further than previous years, Horowitz is sad that she won't be able to play anymore with her senior friends.

"This year especially has been amazing and I loved every second of it. The girls are so fun and welcoming and we're just like a big family," Horowitz said. "It was a great season and I'm really gonna miss the seniors next year."

LASA senior and LBJ Soccer player Casey Dawson agrees with Horowitz that this season was the best season in her four years of high school. She said that this season allowed her to meet new people and create memories that she won't ever forget. Dawson said that she is happy with all the accomplishments this season because they only lost 2 games. Also, she said that this year's team was positive and very supportive. This allowed for them to bond with one another and be able to easily communicate with each other and not just become a team, but a family.

"This season was one of the best of my 4 years with LBJ soccer. I made new friends and a lot of memories that I'll keep with me for the rest of my life," Dawson said. "I loved LBJ soccer, even when it was tough, it made me a better player and person and I learned a lot. I'm so grateful for this team and everyone on it!"

Cardinale said that out of all her years as a soccer coach, she has to say that this year's girl soccer team takes the award for being the most competitive. She was especially impressed by the freshman because of how competitive and good they were. She is glad that most of the girls in the LBJ girls soccer team play for a club team which only allows them to improve faster and be better players in general. Cardinale said she is excited for next years season as she knows that her team will only get better.

"I loved it, the same thing I say every year. I love it when you guys participate in school sports. I love it when you guys have fun," Cardinale said. "The whole point of school sports is to build unity, character, team bonding, sportsmanship. I want to them to go out and play soccer and simply just have fun and be happy."



LASA Sophomore and LBJ soccer forward Rachel Horowitz dribbles past a defender. Photo courtesy of Ashley Gonzales.

REVIEW 2 0 1 6 - 2 0 1 7



1 The LBJ Baseball team reached the first round of the playoffs before losing to Dripping Springs. Above, LASA senior and LBJ Baseball player Seamus Quinn warms ups before a game. *photo by Sarah Porter*

3 This year, the LBJ Boys Basketball team went to the State Quarterfinals before being defeated by Veterans Memorial. Pictured is LBJ sophomore Brian Batts on defense. *photo by Oliver Powers*

5 This season, the LBJ Cross Country team reached the Regional Meet, but didn't preform to their expectations at the meet. LASA senior DayIn Gillentine and junior Audrey Davis compete. *photo by Oliver Powers*

2 Finishing with a crushing loss in the first round of the playoffs as well, The LBJ Football team lost to Alamo Heights. Shown is the team coming out of the tunnel pregame. *photo by Currie Larrimer*

4 The Lady Jags' Volleyball team looks to next season to improve their 6-12 record. LASA senior and Volleyball player Dayla Woller sets the ball. *photo by Emma Jane Hopper*

6 The LBJ Track team reached and placed in the State Meet in many of their Boys and Girls relay teams. LBJ sophomore Dante Borgeois recieves the baton for his relay race. *photo by Samantha Porter*

Students voice concerns over Texas version of North Carolina bathroom bill

JEFFREY KOVAR
Staff Writer

The Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act, also known as House Bill Two is a North Carolina State Bill that was signed March 24, 2016. The bill barred cities from passing local nondiscrimination laws based on gender and sexual orientation. House Bill two also states that all multiple-occupancy bathrooms and changing rooms in public schools, in government agencies and on public campuses to be used by people based on the gender of their birth certificate. LASA sophomore Walker Holmes is opposed to the bill, and he doesn't agree with all of the wording.

"I didn't like the idea of the bill," Holmes said. "I think there were valid concerns brought to the situation by both sides. People should do what makes them happy, but also public safety sounds like a valid concern as well. I think security is a priority for everyone, as well as basic freedoms and happiness, and they just need to find that negotiated medium between the two. I want everyone to have the rights that they deserve, but I don't really know enough about the situation to make a decision either way."

There are opponents to House Bill 2. LGBTQ+ advocates and others who are against the bill argue that it bars local governments from their rights, and is discriminatory toward Transgender people. LASA sophomore Maya Martinez is opposed to House Bill two, citing it as inhumane towards Transgender people.

"I thought it was really in-human and terrible," Martinez said. "Bathrooms are something that everyone should have a right to. It seems like a pretty basic right for humans to have. Being able to have a space that people are safe in is a basic right. It is unfair that not everyone has the ability to feel safe."

One large opponent to the has been the National Basketball League (NBA). On July 21, the NBA moved their All Star game out of Charlotte, which as a huge hit economically to North Carolina. The NBA cited House Bill Two as the main reason why they removed the game from Charlotte. According to the Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, Charlotte lost an estimated \$100 million. LASA teacher David Tapscott, an opponent to House Bill 2, saw this as a necessary move by the NBA.

"I think that when you are a business you have political power, and they were able to exercise that," Tapscott said. "We are talking about exercising that same idea here in Texas. Not only has the NBA done this, but also a lot of businesses have made these sorts of decisions, and they have every right to do so."

The NBA was not the only sports organization to remove their events from North Carolina. The NCAA

moved Duke and North Carolina's first round basketball games for the Men's NCAA tournament from Greensboro to Greenville, S.C., citing House Bill Two as the reason why. In response to the NCAA's decision to move the games, North Carolina instituted a new bill that repeals House Bill 2, but still upholds that no anti-discrimination laws can be made by local governments, until 2020, leaving those powers still up to the state. The NCAA has since issued a statement saying that North Carolina will be considered to host future games again after the counter-bill was instituted. Holmes saw the removal of games as a nice gesture towards Transgender people.

Hockey League (NHL), the National Football League (NFL) and the Major League Baseball (MLB), have not taken such a direct action against North Carolina. The Charlotte Hurricanes, the NHL team in Charlotte released a statement against discrimination after the bill was passed. The NFL released a statement saying they were against discrimination of any kind, however they have not talked about moving any games or barring North Carolina from holding the Superbowl there. Tapscott believes the other organizations will not take action similar to what the NBA and NCAA did.

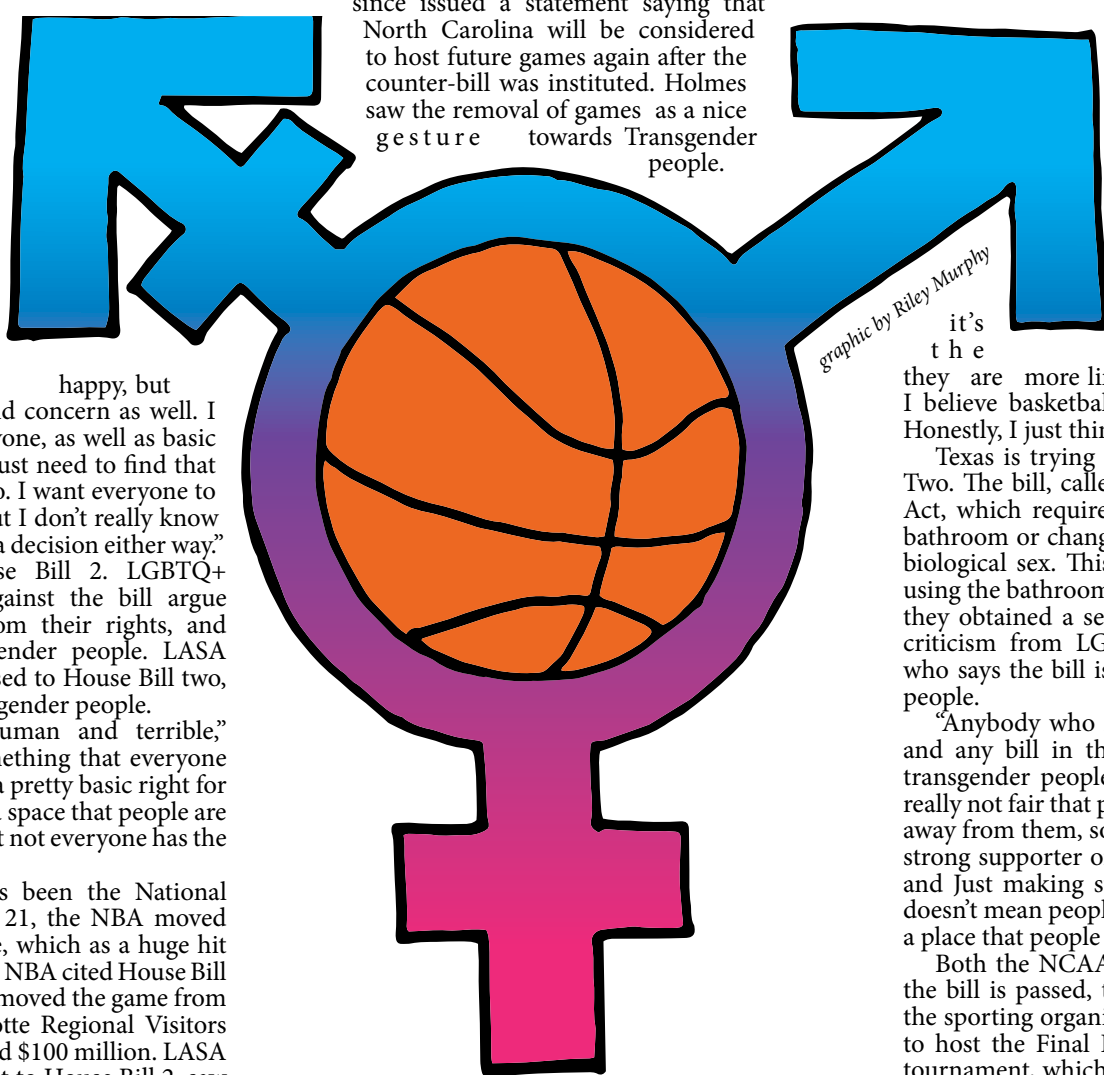
"The NBA General Managers are trying to make sure everyone can play," Tapscott said. "The want to open this brand so it's not just baseball versus softball, football versus powderpuff, but the NBA is saying basketball is for everyone, a skills game. I would like to think other guys could do it, but I think they are more limited in scope than what the NBA is. I believe basketball is the fastest growing sport world. Honestly, I just think the other GMs are clowns."

Texas is trying to pass its own version of House Bill Two. The bill, called Senate Bill 6, or the Texas Security Act, which requires people to use the multi-occupancy bathroom or changing room that corresponds with their biological sex. This would bar transgender people from using the bathroom based on their gender identity, unless they obtained a sex change. The Texas bill has received criticism from LGBTQ+ activists, including Martinez, who says the bill is discriminatory towards Transgender people.

"Anybody who knows me knows that I hate this bill, and any bill in this fashion that discriminates against transgender people for that matter," Martinez said. "It's really not fair that people can have a deliberate right taken away from them, so that other's can be comfortable. I'm a strong supporter of the Take My Hand Texas Campaign, and just making sure that just because this bill is past, doesn't mean people can't feel safe. Bathrooms need to be a place that people feel safe."

Both the NCAA and NBA have warned Texas that if the bill is passed, they may be subject to boycotts from the sporting organizations. The city of San Antonio is set to host the Final Four for the Men's NCAA Basketball tournament, which is estimated to make \$135 million for the city. Tapscott believes the monetary incentive could help sway the decision on whether the bill is passed or not.

"I hope that people are able to stand against the bill for more than just monetary incentive, Tapscott said. "We care a lot about our sports in Texas and we care a lot about our basketball teams. I do think that people would ultimately not be okay with losing those events and the monetary incentive behind them."



"I think it was a nice gesture to the LGBTQ+ community to do this," Holmes said. "However, I think this was probably mostly a business decision because I have some trouble believing Adam Silver has any actual compassion or feelings, unlike Roger Goodell, my hero. They have the right to choose where their events are hosted, so it's up to them."

The other major sporting organizations, the National

Straight to the head: concussions in non-football sports

GRANT MCCASLAND
Staff Writer

The crack of helmets echoes throughout the stadium as linebackers pile on top of a running back. When the pile comes up, one player still lays motionless on the field. The crowd goes silent and holds up J signs in support. A stretcher is eventually brought from the sidelines, ending what seems like forever, and the player is carried off to applause.

Concussions are an occasional injury in contact sports no doubt, but the scene just described isn't always the way it goes down. LBJ Girls Soccer and LBJ Swimming and Diving coach Chloe Cardinale is no newcomer to this, as she has seen many athletes suffer concussions in soccer and even in swimming, a non-contact sport. This requires athletes to sit out for weeks, and has even made some reconsider their future in sports.

"I've had girls quit because they cannot, by doctor's orders, get any more concussions without it being serious and life-threatening," Cardinale said. "I've had girls not come back because of that. That sucks, when you see a girl that is a really good player and loves the sport who's had two or three concussions and her doctor says, basically, [she] can't play contact sports anymore."

Sophomore Aly Hirani plays school and club soccer as well as ultimate frisbee, has experienced his fair share of concussions in sports. The first concussion Hirani got was in sixth grade soccer, which he says forced him to sit out for a couple of months. According to Hirani, it was the sickest he has ever been in his life.

"I had to take ice baths so my fever wouldn't get too high and my doctor said my body was sending immature white blood cells into my bloodstream because it was under so much

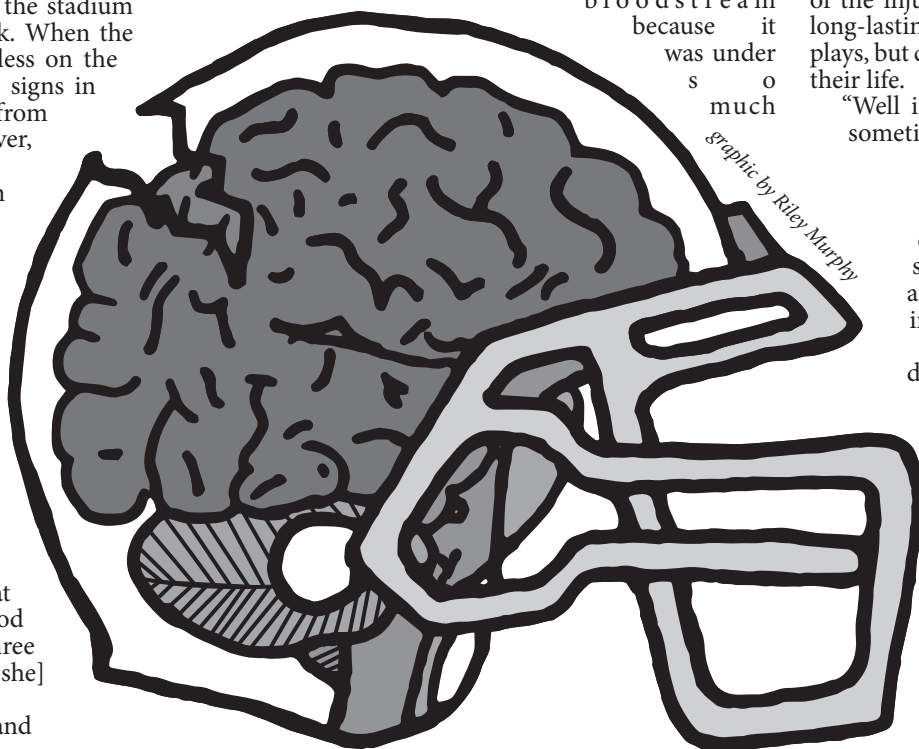
playing."

Concussions can impact athletes much more than physical injuries because of the damaging mental aspect of the injury. Concussions are unique in that they have long-lasting effects that won't only change how an athlete plays, but could be as serious as brain damage that changes their life.

"Well if you tear your ACL, that's a horrible injury, sometimes career-ending, but you can still go to class and learn," said Cardinale. "You get a concussion, you need bed rest and you miss school, you are confused and in a lot of pain, can't eat sometimes. It's very debilitating. Not to say that other injuries aren't debilitating, but it affects the whole body because your head's being injured."

Some athletes are luckier than others depending on the sport they play. Of course, contact sports will always have more concussions than non-contact sports, but it also comes down to preventative measures being taken like rules and equipment. If those measures are relaxed or non-existent, athletes may be playing while concussed and be at risk of even more serious injuries. LASA sophomore Gracie Smith plays lacrosse and cross country, but she has been lucky enough to never suffer from a concussion.

"This hasn't impacted my future since I have never gotten a concussion, but it has convinced some of my teammates to quit because they got such serious concussions and didn't want to risk further injuries in the future," Smith said. "Hopefully I can continue to play and avoid getting a concussion in the future, as I don't want to be forced to quit like some of my teammates."



graphic by Riley Murphy

stress," Hirani said. "The recent one wasn't as bad, I couldn't play sports for 3-4 weeks, but I still feel like I underestimated it because even when I returned to playing soccer I sometimes got intense headaches while

Golf goes gangbusters in regional competition

JORGE VILLA
Staff Writer

The smell of freshly mown grass sets the professional mood at one of LASA's golf tournament to qualify for regionals in San Antonio. In order to get to regionals, the golf team had to place either first or second place in districts. LASA's golf team ended up getting second in districts behind Austin High School which allowed them to continue on to regionals. After qualifying for regionals, Juniors, Hannah Whellan and Jane Walters said that they were excited to have the opportunity to attend regionals. Unfortunately for them, they were not able to attend the tournament because they have to stay in town and study for their AP exams.

"The girls golf team is going to districts," Walters said. "Unfortunately I won't be able to attend because it is right before APs and I need to study. We did place second in district which was cool because it was the first time LBJ/LASA had a girls golf team compete and win medals."

LASA Golf coach and teacher Jon Croston has been coaching for the past two years. He initially decided to take this important role because the golf team was looking for a coach. Croston said that he finds coaching fun and actually enjoys it.

He is aware that many of his golfers won't be able to make regionals in San Antonio, but he is proud of everyone who did make it. Although this season is almost over, Croston is already thinking about his next season. With that in mind, he is recruiting more students to have more to work with and improve next year.

"I just want them to get the chance to experience the tournament. I don't think about their place, just the experience itself is an honor," Croston said. "Next season I'm really looking forward to have a lot more guys out. I need more guys because I will be short on guys and so I need

"I think the highlight of it was placing at districts because we never ever thought that would happen and we also got medals and a plaque that are hanging in the gym hallway," Whellan said. "Overall my golf season was good and I got a lot better and actually started hitting the ball!"

Walters decided to do golf because of her friend Whellan. Like Whellan, this was her first season with the LASA golf team and is planning to continue to do golf next year. One of her favorite things about golf is that it allowed her to meet people from different schools that she wouldn't have met otherwise.

She said that when you spend 4 to 5 hours on a course with another person you really get the opportunity to know them pretty well and eventually become friends with them. She is glad she learned how to play golf and is looking forward to join again next year and become even better along with her friends.

"My golf season personally was really good because I went from barely being able to hit the ball to hitting a birdie at the last tournament," Walters said. "It's fun to see the improvements of the team as a whole because it's barely distinguishable in practice but getting that final score at the end of a tournament and seeing it even a couple points lower than last time is very satisfying."

"I just want them to get the chance to experience the tournament."

-LBJ golf coach Jon Croston

to recruit more guys for next year."

This is Whellan's first year playing for the LASA golf team. In fact, she decided to join because she wanted to have a time designated to be able to relax and play outside. She also said that this helped her release some stress as school stressed her out. Whellan said she is very proud of herself as she improved dramatically since when she first started to play golf two months ago. Overall, she thought this season was good because she was able to make new friends and get to know them better.

Girls lacrosse coach leaves team for rainier pastures

MARLEN AVILLA
Staff Writer

Lacrosse players run across the field, shouting for other members to pass the ball. Their lacrosse sticks are swinging in order to surpass the other team's score. The score ends up to be very close but LBJ lacrosse lost by a mere three points in the A&M tournament. LASA freshman and LBJ lacrosse player Veronica Ruth said that losing wasn't as big of a disappointment as she thought it would be.

"But even though we lost, we had so much improvement and it really fun," Ruth said. "I think it was a good season even though we weren't doing that great. It was a 'getting the team together' season because it was a new coach and new players."

As the season ended with a final game, another change to occur in the team would be the retirement of their long-term coach, Chuck Newell. After coaching the LBJ lacrosse team for the past nine years, Newell retired after this season ended. Like Ruth, LASA junior and LBJ lacrosse player Hannah Whellan felt that after hearing Coach Chuck was retiring was heartbreaking.

"I love him," Whellan said. "He's so supportive and very supportive of the team. He really makes sure that you know what's going on so when you get a bad call or when you're in practice and something happens and

you don't understand the game, he's really there to teach you how to play lacrosse and teach you the techniques of it but in a fatherly, supportive way."

Newell said he will be retiring so he can leave for Portland, Oregon in order to be closer to family. Many of his family members live north so he and his wife made the decision to move. He said he will focus on working with a non-profit organization to help stimulate public education. According to Newell, he will continue to be supportive of the LBJ lacrosse team even though he will miss all of their moments throughout the seasons.

"I will miss them and I think I said it the whole time, the whole nine years that I've been doing this, I get more support from the players than I give to the players," Newell said. "I will miss them a whole lot more."

Although many lacrosse players will miss Coach Chuck because he was such an inspiration, they will not forget all of his efforts in creating a friendly and supportive environment. Ruth said that she is eternally glad for everything that Coach Chuck has done for their lacrosse team.

"For what I've had known him, he has been a good experience and I'd [like] to thank him for always being there," Ruth said. "He was always at all of the practices, he seems like he's someone who is really reliable. I'm glad that he is able to retire and go to his family because family is priority but we shall miss him."



LBJ lady jags lacrosse team competes in the Aggieldand Tournament on Feb. 4-5. "I'm really glad that I stuck with lacrosse, it's not something that I would quit for as long as I'm high school," LASA sophomore and LBJ lacrosse player Veronica Ruth said. photo courtesy of Anisah Aguilar

track

continued from page 1

adrenaline and energy at the track meets, but also the team atmosphere."

Horowitz said that she was excited about placing in states and it reminded her of when Horowitz and Porter led the way to the Junior Olympics in the summer of 2016. Horowitz said the Junior Olympics was an amazing experience and that the team felt lucky to be there. Porter said that the coaches push the runners to the best of their ability at practice. Even though the running can be strenuous, Porter said that coaches have prepared the team well to compete at states.

"The practices are usually really hard, especially when we're conditioning at the beginning of the season," Porter said. "The coaches are all very supportive of us. Sometimes they can be difficult, but we all know that they have our team's best interest at heart."

Porter and Horowitz both have high hopes for the short distance runners on track. LASA sophomore Cameron Kleinman, who has run for the varsity team since his freshman year, said that LBJ's long distance runners also performed well. Kleinman said that the team has made some memorable advancements.

"We've had a lot of track meets this season, I'd say around five or so. However, we totally crushed it at the district meet, as we pretty much expected. We're definitely the most dominant school in our district at track, and we also have the widest range of runners," Kleinman said. "We have tons of great sprinters team, but our distance runners continually impress me. At district, LBJ took first in every single mile race, JV and Varsity, Boys and Girls, and that was exciting to experience."

Kleinman said that in addition to the team's success,

LBJ track provides a second home for many runners and fosters lasting friendship. Kleinman's time on the track team has not been long, but he said he's developed close ties with many of his teammates.

"I run track here at LBJ because it's pretty much my sport. I love running, and track lets me do it competitively, which is a whole new level of fun," Kleinman said. "I'm not sure if I'll do track after high school as it's such a commitment. I think I'll probably have other academic responsibilities in college, but that definitely won't keep me from running in general. I'd like to do Cross Country in college, however."

Kleinman, along with much of the rest of the varsity track team, will be training over the summer. Kleinman said the love for track that he and his teammates share is a powerful and uniting factor.

"Track is incredibly

exciting sport. There's something exciting about standing on the line and feeling the rush of energy after the start gun goes off," Kleinman said. "Plus, track is all about personal improvements. If you go out and run a race faster than you've ever done it before, then that's as much of a victory as winning the race."



After placing third in 4x200 and fourth in 4x100 Hanah Porter (third from the left) poses with teammates and coaches. "I love track because I love the community and the feeling I get when we are all together, like all of our hard work paid off." Porter said. photo courtesy of Hannah Porter

SPRING INTO DANCE

The Dance Spring Show featured the First Ladies, solos and other groups such as K-pop and LBJ dance teacher Shelby Miller's class on Thursday April 27 and Friday April 28 in the LASA/LBJ theater. The performers began working on the spring show immediately after their competition in February. The First Ladies' dance pieces were choreographed by the officers and Miller.



1 According to senior Caitlyn Wilson, the K-pop group practiced one to two times per week since the beginning of the second semester to prepare for the performance. "I performed 'Very Nice' by the K-pop group Seventeen," Wilson said. "I enjoyed the fellowship with my peers. I have been with the dance group for two years, since it first began. For the most part we try to mirror the same choreography as the dance groups, but occasionally we add in our own creativity to give it more flare. It is such an amazing experience to be able to perform the hard work that you've dedicated a lot of your time to. It's very rewarding!" photos by Meena Anderson

2 Senior Eunice Kim said she enjoyed dancing with the First Ladies for three years. "This was the last pose of our senior dance," Kim said. "We danced to 'Photograph' by Ed Sheeran and it was really sad, because it was one of the last times we were dancing on that stage, on that team."



3 When Miller's dance class takes the stage, senior Dalia Roth strikes a pose. "The dance class volunteer dancers performed Trini Dem Girls, a fast paced hip-hop dance," Roth said. "This was definitely my favorite dance by far this year because it was my chance to be sassy on stage, a contrast from the lyrical dance my class performed for Winter Show. Being sassy is what I do best so it felt good to express that in front of an audience."

4 LASA senior Lydia Rogerson was a part of the LBJ First Ladies for her four years of high school. "I will miss just having a team and a place to go whenever I need," Rogerson said. "I know when I go to the dance room there's always going to be someone there to talk to and laugh with. I've created so many memories in the past four years, and I've made countless friendships, so it's sad to think I won't continue next year."

