

MAY 2021



NOT JUST A FACE IN THE CROWD

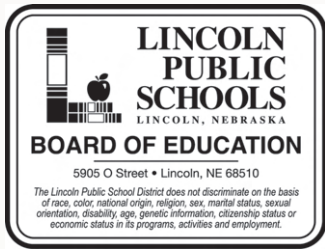


VOL
21

LINCOLN SOUTHEAST HIGH SCHOOL

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letter from the editor. hello.



It is May. The end of the school year is rapidly approaching, and the majority of the student body has returned to school. With an abundance of students in the hallways and classrooms, LSE is slowly returning to its former disposition - brimming with liveliness and full of chatter.

Of course, we have all the right to be elevated. We survived a turbulent school year and challenged ourselves to adapt to on-line learning. However, despite going through similar hardships, it seems as though the pandemic has made us strangers. With new faces in the building as students transition to in-person school, it feels as though we are meeting each other for the first time. Now, it is important to realize that the people we brush past in the hallway have stories as vivid and complex as our own. Our student body consists of dedicated musicians, aspiring entrepreneurs, skillful athletes, and passionate individuals. The staff also have their own lives outside of the classroom, partaking in unique hobbies and engaging with multiple communities outside of LSE.

Before we end the school year, the Clarion staff and I want to share with you the narratives of those around us. In this issue, you will find feature stories on teachers like Mrs. Rice and Mr. Sanchez, who possess remarkable experiences prior to teaching at LSE, and pieces investigating the normalities of our generation, such as high school cliques and digital disconnection. Through this, it is our goal to emphasize that every individual at LSE is unique in their own way. At the end of the day, the distinct characteristics of our students and staff constitute the spirit of the school that we love. The crowd may be unfamiliar, but the individuals are dynamic and genuine.

Dear reader, we're delighted and ever so grateful that you're reading our stories, but we're aware that you have your own as well. Don't hesitate to share them. Your opinion and voice matters, since, after all, you are not just a face in the crowd.

Jen Quach

about the cover.

As you enter the crowded hallway after the bell rings, you pass by different people, including students and teachers. Many of the students and staff passing by you seem like ordinary people that you don't know much about, but they all carry with them entire stories and interesting lived experiences that you may never get to know.

For this issue, we wanted to explore those stories and shed light on those experiences. Rather than seeing people as ordinary and believing that they blend in with everyone else, we explore what makes them unique, replacing the black and white filter we often assign to strangers. After learning their story and acknowledging that they truly shine in a group of people, they are no longer another face in the crowd.

The Design Team wanted to create a representation of not blending in, but representing one's own individuality.

For our cover, we decided on a plain setting of a solid background where people made of a monochrome color scheme walk unbothered. The monochrome purple palette shows how a person's colors aren't shown until they stop and express their own individuality. As for the x's marked on their faces, people are unknown and hidden in the crowd, submerged in the comfortable feeling of remaining anonymous. The person standing in the middle of the cover in between the walking crowd represents how colorful and unique a person truly is once they are discovered in a group.

Each individual is colorful and filled with stories, they are not just another ordinary person. Next time you walk in a crowded hallway, acknowledge that the people walking by you carry their own individual stories that make them who they are. Appreciate their existence rather than leaving with the thought, "they are just another face in the crowd."

The Design Team - Fatima Al-Jayashi, Erin Geschwender, and Zainib Al-Jayashi

RESILIENCE:

LOOKING BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF
THE SCHOOL YEAR AND LOOKING FORWARD
TO WHAT'S TO COME WITH PRINCIPAL PENROD

Jennifer Quach | Editor-in-Chief

At the beginning of the year, there was one word that was used to represent how school staff and students alike were feeling regarding education during the pandemic-- overwhelmed. As teachers struggle to adapt to the social and academic needs of students, encounters with technological problems only exacerbated the situation. Every day consisted of inboxes flooded with emails and a continuous change of plans. However, as LSE is approaching the end of the school year, a different word can be used to describe our attitudes and productivity-- resilience.

Resilience was the word LSE Principal Tanner Penrod used to express Southeast's ability to adapt and change in regards to the dynamics of the school year. With the perspective of a father and an administrator, Penrod prioritizes a safe and welcoming environment when considering how to manage a school. Thus, a learning environment in which students are prioritized as an individual is one that Penrod believes produces the most success.

"I started teaching swimming lessons when I was at a really young age with my mother," Penrod said. "I was probably 12 or 13 years old... and I liked the concept of helping somebody do something that they didn't think they would be able to do and seeing growth and change over time. My philosophy with education is that both students and teachers should feel comfortable and safe in an academic environment before we can even consider what the

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learning process needs to look like."

Penrod has had an abundance of experience as an educator before his position as principal of Southeast, and his passion for creating a productive and positive school environment continues. Coming into the position of principal during the pandemic, Penrod faced new responsibilities regarding a change in procedures and had to set unprecedented goals for both students and staff. However, to Penrod, it is important to find a balance between focusing on pandemic protocols and the emotional and social aspect of the school. Aside from COVID-19, it is especially crucial to consider the need for equity in a learning environment after many social justice movements have gained prominence, and Penrod makes it his goal to sustain LSE's ability to facilitate open discussions and provide the necessary resources for both students and staff to feel comfortable and included.

"Early in the school year I think we did a better job of equipping staff to have difficult conversations in classrooms tied to race, equality, inclusivity, and social justice," Penrod said. "I think we were off to a good start in the first semester, but as we transferred into the second semester we lost some of that momentum. That's something I want to continue working on. We established a multicultural leadership cadre that I think has a potential to be instrumental in leading our equity and social justice efforts into the future, so I'm excited to work with this group in the summer and the fall to continue these efforts into next year."

However, Penrod has witnessed a great change in not only the students' and staff's response to the dynamics of the school year but also a vast difference in attitudes, which allow for more academic success. As students transitioned to learning at school full-time, there seemed to be a weight lifted off of teachers, who no longer had to divide their attention between A, B, and Z students. This allowed for greater connections between students and staff, and the value of in-person interactions became apparent. Thus, LSE's academic triumphs are due to the resilience of the students and staff, who

were able to adapt and collaborate with one another to ensure academic success.

"I was pleasantly surprised with how cooperative everybody was and how much everyone wanted to pitch in and do what's right in order for us to stay in school," Penrod said. "The fact that people have remained so positive and productive and the level of collaboration between staff and students is special to Southeast. People being willing to step up and support each other is something I have seen throughout the school year."

With optimism stemming from the hopes of a successful end to the school year, Penrod wants to prevent the fatigue tied to the last year's hardships from negatively impacting the academic outcomes for students. This requires a conscious effort from both students and staff to ensure a productive and positive environment, and allowing students to return to school full-time has aided that goal. Through this, we can expect to finish the school year with the enthusiasm in which we started.



Photo Cred: Tanner Penrod



Multicultural leadership cadre meeting. Photo Cred: Peter Ferguson

"I feel a different energy right now with more people being in the building," Penrod said. "I think socially, it is very healthy for students to be back in person and see each other interact with their friends and interact with their teachers. I think the school year has proven to us that we all value in-person interactions more than we might've thought. But throughout the school year, the constants are positivity, hard work, and resilience, and I am proud of both staff and students alike. It's always important to care for one another, work hard, and set goals."



Photo Cred: Meg Rajala

When students are very young, they are asked what they want to be when they grow up. Many of their answers correlate to their interests: 'Well, I really like my teacher so maybe I will also be a teacher.' 'I really like running, so maybe I will become an Olympic athlete.' Interests help students realize what they like to do, and what they can do in their futures.

One way students are able to explore their interests is through extracurriculars. Extracurricular activities are a large part of the high school experience. Joining after school activities helps students learn and expand the interests they might otherwise not be able to enjoy during school hours. According to a report from the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2014, 57 percent of children and teens are involved in at least one extracurricular activity. While the majority of Lincoln Southeast High School (LSE) students are involved in extracurricular activities, it is the amount that students are involved in that differs.

Megann Timm (12) is involved in several extracurricular activities. These include Color Guard, theater, choir and speech. Along with her activities, she also has a part time job as a cafeteria worker at Bryan Hospital and is actively involved in her church.

While most students join extracurricular activities to boost their college resumes, Timm has more reasoning for her joining Color Guard, for which she has been the captain for the last two years.

"I actually started the Color Guard team because I wanted to make my older sister proud. She was an ROTC [Reserve Officers Training Corps] for the Air Force, but I can't join the military

because of medical issues," Timm said. "I didn't even really know what [Color Guard] was. I thought it was people who helped hold the American flag; that's ROTC. Then I figured out what it was and I fell in love with it."

Timm also had similar intentions when she joined the theater department her freshman year.

"I started theater just because I've always been interested in theater, it's always been such a point of inspiration for me," Timm said.

While Timm originally wanted to be involved in the acting side of theater, she started behind the scenes, which she quickly fell in love with. Most recently, Timm served as the Assistant Stage Manager for the 2021 Spring Musical "Little Women".

While it is obvious that Timm has a large place in her heart for the humanities, her future career involves more of a scientific focus.

"I'm going to UNL's [University of Nebraska-Lincoln] College of Agricultural Science and Natural Resources... I'm going there to study pre-veterinary sciences, which is a non-degree major, so I'm also minoring in fisheries and wildlife so that I can continue my path towards exotic animals because I want to be a zoo vet," Timm said.

While many may be wondering why Timm is involved in humanities related activities while eventually focusing on the sciences, recent research has shown a positive correlation between the humanities and the sciences.

Business journalist George Anders wrote in his book titled "You Can Do Anything: The Surprising Power of a 'Useless' Liberal Arts Education" that as the world becomes more dependent on science and technology, the less

creative and empathic the human race becomes.

According to Anders, this divide between the humanities and the sciences makes it "even more essential it is to bring human judgement into the junctions of our digital lives."

Doane University in Crete, Nebraska has brought this idea into its curriculum with a class titled "Narrative Medicine" which, according to the course description, teaches students to explore "the intersection between the study of narrative and the art of caregiving."

Now that this correlation is starting to be recognized at the collegiate level, even more students like Timm have realized their interests, while not directly related to their aspiring careers, can help them immensely in the future.

"I was confused for while that I still wanted to be a vet and how much I loved the arts, but now I know that I can love both and still be me," Timm said.

Timm is not alone in her differing interests that will lead her to a career as a zoo veterinarian with a love for theater and all things relating to the arts. Despite the world becoming more digitally dependent by the day, the arts continue to preserve and provide a point of view that coding and wires simply cannot.

There will be a time when technology will become irreparable, and hopefully there will be people like Timm that will still show the rest of the world that we can still be digital and human at the same time.

NARRATIVE MEDICINE

Megann Timm discovers the key connection between humanities and science



Jerrica Zuhlke | Copy Editor

STEVEN DOSSKEY: AN ICONIC FACE AT LSE

A PASSIONATE LSE ALUM

The common misconception about being “involved” in high school is that the sole purpose is to build up your resume for college and future jobs. While this may be true for certain individuals, the people who were truly “involved” in high school were the students who built relationships, harnessed new skills and uplifted the school in new ways. Steven Dosskey is an alumni of Lincoln Southeast High School (LSE), and he is well known among current students. Dosskey is known for his positive energy and involvement in many activities around LSE, fitting into the category

of being involved with his high school and with his community.

Finding time to stay active with LSE even after graduation shows the dedication and spirit Dosskey has. After graduating high school in 2011, Dosskey attended the Raikes Program at University of Nebraska-Lincoln as a Computer Science major.

“Since graduating from UNL in 2015, I’ve hopped around between several software companies in Lincoln,” Dosskey said.

Although he entered the workforce, Dosskey was not finished with his commitment to his high school.

“In a way, I never fully left Southeast,” Dosskey said.

Jacob Miller | Copy Editor

In high school, he was an active member of Lincoln Southeast’s debate team, deciding to return to the program as an assistant coach for Congress.

“As an assistant coach, I help with Congress practice twice a week after school during the season,” Dosskey said. “Additionally, as a judge on the Nebraska Circuit, I’m busy at tournaments most Saturdays during the season.”

Building relationships was something Dosskey excelled at in high school. He had maintained connections with the cross country and soccer programs even after his time at LSE. It was during college that he decided to return to the LSE Boys Soccer program, not as a player but as a coach. Shortly after, he returned to the debate program

as an assistant coach.

“I obviously enjoyed these activities as a competitor in high school, and still do in my own life,” Dosskey said. “More importantly, I started to realize that being a coach, mentor and guide is something I truly enjoy dedicating myself to and is very fulfilling for me.”

One of the most precious memories Dosskey had of his high school experience was playing soccer for the LSE Boys Varsity Soccer team. In 2016, Dosskey returned to the program and became the LSE JV boys soccer coach, this year being his sixth year coaching.

While Dosskey grew up with a passion for soccer, he also grew up with a passion for his faith. He has been involved in a Christian organization called Young Life, through the organization itself and through LSE. Dosskey joined Young Life his sophomore year of high school and has been helping on and off with the program. The mission of Young Life is to introduce adolescents to Jesus and help them grow in their faith. Dosskey grew from his high school self into a guide for today’s high school students.

“Young Life is a fantastic opportunity to be a mentor, guide, role model and a helping hand for groups of high schoolers years at a time,” Dosskey said.

To Dosskey, being involved was one of the greatest decisions

he’s ever made. He often helps around his community and has even done some public speaking through Ignite [Speaking Event]. As a Lincoln Southeast Alumni, he has carved his own path to making connections and making a difference, but he has also helped carve a similar path for past and present LSE students who are as involved as he was.



**“IN A WAY, I NEVER FULLY LEFT
SOUTHEAST.”
- STEVEN DOSSKEY**

A CHANGE IN ROUTE

How Juan Sanchez Contreras
rediscovered his passion for teaching

Fatima Al-Jayashi | Design Editor

A journey of more than 1,779 miles can be an intimidating experience for some, but for Lincoln Southeast Spanish teacher Juan Sanchez Contreras, this journey led him to his dream career. Through all the changes and new experiences he had to face, he stayed on the path to accomplish his passion and dream in life: becoming a teacher.

Sanchez grew up in Mexico in a small town called Cuautla in the state of Jalisco. Growing up, he always enjoyed being in school and having the opportunity to learn. His father was also a teacher, which helped influence him to continue education as a career.

"[My father would] teach a group of five people at a school, and he would share those stories with us," Sanchez said. "That's where I got the interest of becoming a teacher."

With this dream in mind, he soon created plans for it. When Sanchez was 18-years-old, he decided to immigrate to the United States to work and earn enough money to go to college back in Mexico. Sanchez's sister already lived in Lincoln and owned a restaurant, so he started working there to make money.

After settling in the United States for a while, he soon realized how much he enjoyed being in Lincoln.

"I liked the culture and the people here. People in Lincoln were very welcoming, and I felt very comfortable," Sanchez said. "I felt at home, and I decided to stay here."

With his plans going in a different direction, he continued to work at the restaurant for a long time. However, a motivation inside him pushed him to pursue his dream of being a teacher and convinced him to return back to school.

"I had a love for school, and I missed being in school. I missed the classrooms. I missed the smell of pencil and paper," Sanchez said. "Then one day I decided to go back to school and get my degree."

When Sanchez was a child, he initially wanted to be a History teacher in Mexico. When he decided to go to school here in the United States, he took a different route.

"When I had the opportunity to go back to school here, I thought of becoming a Spanish teacher because I'm already a Spanish speaker," Sanchez said. "I [could] use that as an advantage and teach my students."

When tackling this ambitious decision, doubts started to form in his head, but he didn't let them ruin his passion and the goal he

wanted to achieve since he was a child.

"That obstacle was in my mind thinking that I'm already too old for this, and I don't think that I can go back to college at this age," Sanchez said. "But then, something in my mind [told me] that time goes by very quickly, and I should get the satisfaction of getting that degree."

Another obstacle he also had to face was that he had to tackle his classes while having a family. Sanchez took two classes at a time



**I HAD A
LOVE FOR
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AND I MISSED
BEING IN
SCHOOL.**

- Juan Sanchez Contreras

while working part-time at his job in the restaurant, so he wouldn't have to spend a lot of money. This process, however, took him eight years to attain his degree in becoming a teacher.

"It was something that I wanted to achieve, and it was more challenging [with the obstacles], but it was also very rewarding," Sanchez said.

As a Spanish teacher at LSE, he is able to see the positive outcomes of his dream coming true and being able to persevere through the

hurdles during the journey.

"Most of the joy for me is getting to know students and helping them achieve their own obstacles and break their barriers," Sanchez said. "Seeing them grow is very rewarding for me."

Sanchez is a firm believer that anyone can achieve their dreams if they set their mind to it. He hopes that his role as a teacher can help motivate students to become greater, no matter who they are and where they come from.

"More than anything, I [hope] to inspire [my students] to be better and that they can set something up as far as having a goal, and knowing that they can do it," Sanchez said. "My goal is to impact students who are having trouble in school and get them to change their mentality and get them to become successful in school."

As a Spanish teacher, Sanchez believes students taking a world language class is very beneficial.

"I think one of the things that we're teaching world language is the idea of having a second point of view and a different perspective of things," Sanchez said. "By teaching culture in our classes, we also introduce students with new information about where we come from."

Students don't often know the stories of teachers who help build Southeast. Every person at Southeast has their own story of who they are that makes them shine through the crowded hallways. For Sanchez, his journey from Mexico to Southeast is one to listen to and take inspiration from. Sanchez shows us that no matter where you come from, you can make big differences -- not only other people but in yourself.



Photo Credit: Meg Rajala



Photos By: Alyson Edie
@alysonediephotography

CAROLINE MILLER : WIN THE DAY

How hard work and heart taught her to take the reins

Lauren Van Treeck | Staff Writer

Reputations precede us. Lincoln Southeast High School (LSE) is a place full of fascinating and talented students. However, are we narrow-minded in the way we view our peers? Do we limit them to what they are best known for, whether it be theater or academics or athletics? Do we thus limit ourselves? When taking a closer look at the familiar faces in the halls, we may learn new things about people we think we know.

LSE senior Caroline Miller is a talented individual. Some recognize her for her athletic ability, leading the LSE Girls' Varsity Tennis team to win state in 2019. Some recognize her for her academic achievements, with a high GPA and numerous AP classes. However, not many can say that they know much about Miller's real passion in life: equestrianism.

Miller competes in a form of horse riding called dressage. Dressage, according to Miller, is a form

of riding "based off engaging the horse's muscles in certain ways, like ice skating or gymnastics." The sport involves mastery, as the horse and its trainer must memorize a series of predetermined movements in front of a panel of judges. In order to train for competitions of dressage, Miller works with her horse, Daisy, nearly every day. She emphasized the importance of the relationship between the horse and trainer, "You don't really understand how important the relationship with a horse is until you are there working with them five to seven days a week."

Miller has been riding horses for the last ten years and her experience has taught her the hardship and fulfillment that comes with the sport.

"You get thrown off the horse multiple times or you have to work with them for two years and then you finally see the results and it's like I understand why I push through that

and the reward is so much better than all of that (hardship)," Miller said.

In addition to training with the horse, Miller noted the daily maintenance tasks required to gain trust and form a relationship with Daisy.

"A lot of it is grooming and bonding with your horse a bit. We have this thing called groundwork, where you work with a horse while you're on the ground, and so you're doing little exercises with them to help improve their well-being," Miller said.

While the training can be strenuous and intense, Miller ensures that there are good, fun days with Daisy as well.

"On Sundays, I want to give her easy days because it's important for her to always like her job," Miller said.

Miller, who has other pets, re-

flects on how the relationship with her horse is very different than that of her dogs.

"I think it's the same as to how important it can be, people love their dogs and have a really good relationship with them," Miller said. The difference, to her, is found in the training aspect.

"You don't give horses treats every time they do something good, so you have to have a relationship enough where the horse understands when they're being good based off of your actions and your feelings," Miller said.

Because of this, Miller sees her relationship with her horse as very meaningful.

"She's my teammate. Daisy's my teammate and I work with her all the time," Miller said.

Not only does Miller train with her own horse, she also gives riding lessons to younger kids. She began teaching a year ago when her own trainer was on maternity leave. For a while, she taught as many as ten lessons a week. At this point, she teaches four or five per week and each is an hour long. Miller's lessons have become a source of fun for her.

"It's very rewarding to have them (the students) set a goal and you can see their progress. You can just see how much they love horses and how fun they are on them and how horses can change people's lives," Miller said.

Overall, with training, maintenance and lessons combined, Miller is usually at the barn every day for five to six hours a day. This is in addition to school and tennis. With her increased workload at the barn this year, Miller had to learn the importance of communication with people in her life.

Chris Salem, the LSE tennis coach, who's known Miller for years, has seen how much her life has changed due to her involvement in horse riding.

"She's teaching a lot of lessons to young riders and she's taking it a little bit more seriously herself, so we've had to be flexible in terms of practice times. I'm more than happy to be flexible with people

when they have positive activities going on," Salem said.

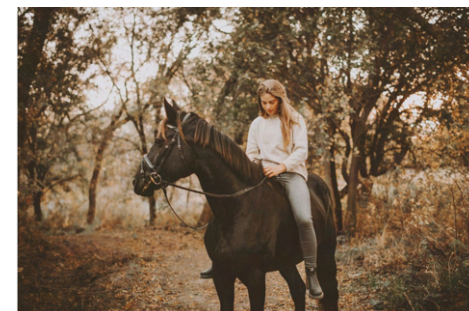
Salem has seen Miller's dedication to her passions on and off the court, stating that "She's always one of the hardest workers in a group that I've experienced. She's not a complainer, she doesn't shy away from difficult situations." Though Miller has had to adjust her schedule to fit all of her activities, she is committed to staying involved through communication and commitment.

To Miller, all the hard work and dedication is worth it. She plans to continue her involvement in horse riding in the future. Her ultimate goal is to become a professional rider. She already has plans to become a working student for a horse trainer in Palmyra, Nebraska this summer.

Miller truly loves horse riding and she uses her passion to educate others. However, over the years, she has had to overcome many stereotypes that people have about equestrianism. She has also faced uninterested peers because her passion isn't mainstream or popular. Many students have interests or hobbies that go against the grain and Miller hopes that people learn to pursue their passions anyway.

"I've learned to not care what other people think about me and it makes life a lot easier. If it's what brings you joy and it's what makes you happy then that is so much more worth putting time and effort into rather than trying to satisfy what other people expect of you," Miller said.

Reputations have a way of limiting us as people. Miller is not simply a tennis player, a high achieving student or even a horse trainer. She is a multifaceted person with many interests and passions that she cares deeply about. She has dreams and hopes that people don't know of. We all do. Miller's passions make her who she is. Every face in the crowd has passions that make them who they are. These passions require heart and motivation. We are all more than what we are best known for. We all have stories worth sharing.



A growing passion with each stroke

Dameer Gustafson's journey through playing the violin and the connections it brings him

Tyler Vander Woude | Staff Writer



“I felt music is a strong passion for me, I’ve actually been really thankful to reach out to other people, not just our friends from high school, but people from nursing home communities and just minority cultures from the People City Mission.”
-Dameer Gustafson (12)

A drop of sweat slid down his forehead gathering at the tip of his brow, and as he played the final note it shimmered, falling from its resting place in perfect synchronization with the stroke of his bow. As the droplet hit the ground, he heard a splash of applause that soon turned into a roaring torrent of hoots and hollers mixed with a standing ovation. He was finished. Dameer had seen what his future held and he was going to take it.

Unbeknownst to many, Dameer Gustafson has a deep passion for the musical arts that started in fourth grade when Gustafson's mother placed their ticket in the raffle in an attempt to get a violin for a year. That's when Gustafson's head popped up as a smile formed on his face and his eyes grew wide.

“To my surprise, I actually got it and that's where the music journey started,” Gustafson said.

Along his journey Gustafson has learned and played many pieces, carefully honing the skills of bowmanship and fingering. Yet, there is one piece he can always look back on “Plink Plank Plunk.”

“It was a plucking piece that I did back in seventh grade and I remember one of my best friends [Kenneth Ou] and I at the time just absolutely love playing that, and we had a blast, just making fun of it,” Gustafson said.

Gustafson has played with many talented musicians and made many friends on his journey. Through playing music with others, Gustafson's friendships were strengthened, and six years after the first “Plink Plank Plunk” playthrough, Gustafson and Ou have many laughs they are able to share.

“I've had the privilege to just

hang out with him, and to be able to share my passion and music with him,” Gustafson said.

However, his journey has not been completely free of obstacles.

“There are many obstacles with playing the violin, you have to get positioning right, posture, notes, especially when they're high in the register,” Gustafson said. “Bowing technique, and doing stuff with both your hands is quite a challenge for me, but I've overcome that throughout the years.”

To get where he is today, Gustafson has had a great teacher and many others who have shown him strong support. His number one supporter and private teacher, however, is his grandma. She has been with him since he started his journey playing violin: from giving lessons, going to concerts, and even playing alongside him, she has always been his biggest supporter and instructor.

“She's been teaching me private lessons, and she was also the one who helped me get into multiple honors orchestras throughout high school. She has helped me in private lessons weekly, and she's really continued to help me [with] getting into college and just thinking about the actual lifestyle [that] a musician goes through day by day,” Gustafson said.

As he looks towards the future, Gustafson is diving head first into music education. He is going to continue to pursue his passion at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln by entering the Glenn Korff School of Music. This will allow him many opportunities and options post college in the field of music.

“I plan on doing that as my career, teaching either



Photo courtesy Dameer Gustafson

elementary, middle, or high school students to develop their passion for music too,” Gustafson said.

Gustafson will never stop playing music, but in his future he sees himself on the other side of the symphony in a role that few get to obtain, a professional conductor. As a conductor, Gustafson would allow the young and old to feel a sense of bliss as the symphony plays gracefully with the directions from his movements.

“I've met a lot of conductors over the past four years who've actually had the luxury of traveling across the United States and Europe and even Japan,” Gustafson

said. “It just sounds like a really cool journey just to be part of music and just to share that with other people around the world.”

As he has grown further in his passion for music over the years, to the point where he wants to follow it as his career, Gustafson has learned there is more than just the hum of a string and a stroke of a bow. To him it's a way to reach out to others, and a way for him to connect with God.

“It's a way for me to connect with God more and have a [close,] personal relationship. It has helped me with my spiritual walking, in a weird quirky way, but I feel that it's really drawn out to me and that's why I've continued to do it,” Gustafson said.

Gustafson has played on many stages and has numerous stories from countless hours of practice, but his most memorable one is junior year All-state Orchestra. In a time when fellowship was difficult, the All-State Orchestra provided him an opportunity and a place to be with other musicians and play in front of the shining lights with a live crowd. It was a momentous event for Gustafson where his only option was to do well.

“Being able to reach out to friends from other high schools, and being able to play on the Lied Center Stage was the highlight

of the century,” Gustafson said. “[It was] very nerve wracking, especially when you have a lot of people show up and you know it's the Lied stage, you have to do something good.”

Late night stars and early morning sunrises, raw fingers and sore arms, the nutty woody smell of an instrument, are what it takes to progress with music and make it to the big stages, while having strong support is what keeps Gustafson's fire burning and his passion flowing.

“It takes a lot of dedication and a lot of hard work, and I would totally recommend a private teacher. If you have a grandma that can help you with music, go for it because, honestly, my grandma has been my number one supporter in that. So, definitely find something you're good at, [it] doesn't even have to be classical music. Find motivation, develop the passion, and ride with it,” Gustafson said.

With each stroke of the bow his passion grows deeper, and with the support of his grandma, Gustafson continues to pursue his passion of music, he'll be going to the Glenn Korff School of Music at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and one day he wants to orchestrate music around the world bringing the sweet hums and soft vibrations of a symphony to all who can hear it.



RAFAEL LIMA MARTINEZ

Dedicated distance runner has much more to offer than just speed



Brayden Adcock | Staff Writer

It's mid-afternoon on the track of a neighboring high school. Students and coaches stand anxiously on the light green turf. The wind shifts westward. Racers from the previous event make their closing pass, sparking a dialogue among their peers about "split times" and the hesitation that comes with being a part-time student athlete. The 800-Meter Relay event is about to start.

The track, as dry and cracked as it's ever been, is packed lane by lane with young athletes. Tension can be felt piercing through the air. Right now, everyone's in it for themselves. All of a sudden, a man with a starting pistol begins to exclaim: "On your mark..."

Bang! The race has finally begun. One student sits on a blanket at the corner of the field, watching as some of their friends pass by on the track. Everyone running looks determined to win, including the Lincoln Southeast High School (LSE) sophomore Rafael Lima Martinez. When he turns the corner, though, it feels different. His scrunched face and striking posture accentuate his athletic capabilities.

Off the field, Martinez, affectionately nicknamed "Raf" by his peers, is an average high school student in Lincoln. At LSE, he's often found hanging out with friends in the cafeteria or attending a club meeting. Outside of school he's out and about, whether it be riding his bike around town or mowing lawns for neighbors. But even with a plethora of activities and hobbies under his belt, including computer building, Martinez still finds the time for athletics.

As a student at LSE, Martinez has participated in three different sports: cross country, wrestling, and track & field. These sports, each spanning three different

“**YOU REALLY HAVE TO REACH INSIDE YOUR HEAD AND PUT EVERYTHING YOU GOT INTO IT.**

- Rafael Lima Martinez (10)

seasons, are just the cherry on top in Martinez's repertoire. Track, in particular, is what he happens to be working through right now. As for where his motivation lies, he has a few things that keep him going.

"There are a lot of motivators that cause me to keep running," Martinez said. "One is competition. I know that others are running hard and putting in work everyday and because of that it helps remind me I need to do the same in order to compete."

Competition dominates the landscape of high school sports, but an even more important factor is one's own reasons to push through. Although community often creeps in for support every so often, intrinsic motivation fulfills this innate desire for self-motivation, giving students the energy to engage in the sometimes brutal world of long distance running. This sentiment is echoed by Martinez's love for cross country.

"I'm interested in Cross Country because it's really difficult and unlike any other sport," Martinez said. "You really have to reach inside your head and put everything you got into it. It makes you feel like you really gave it your all when you finish."

The theme of hard work expressed by Martinez is carried over to track, as well.

"I find running hard," Martinez said. "I am always pushing myself. If it isn't hard [to practice], then you aren't usually working hard to get better. I feel as if it should always be hard to improve."

Martinez isn't afraid to use hard work to set himself apart from the competition, his sheer determination being evidence of this. But he's also not afraid to shed light on his family heritage.

"What really sets me apart is that I am a immigrant student athlete," Martinez said. "Being from Mexico at a young age, it really drives me and makes me feel different from everyone else. It makes me feel special in a way, and because of that I am the very first person in my family to do sports in the United States."

According to the Pew Research Center, there are more than 800,000 Mexican immigrants living in the US under the age of 21. This is 10 times less than the number of student athletes in the US, 8 million, per the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

Given his immigrant status, Martinez is heavily inspired by being the first in his family to run at




all, saying that he wants to be "one of the best" to do it in his family. Another major factor to his success are friends, who provide moral support for his endeavors.

"Friends are really important in my life," Martinez said. "They really cheer me up and are there when I need help. I end up talking to them a lot, inside and outside of school."

Track tournaments are very communal. Students are not only there to compete with each other, but to also cheer on teammates as they pass and bond with them on large tarps. To anyone competing there's a strong sentiment of love and dedication, but once they're on the track and the starting pistol goes off, it's all up to them.

Martinez is yet another example of the hard work and dedication it takes to compete in the world of track & field. Everyone has their reasons to succeed.



The Stormy Journey to Nebraska

How Angelea Rice's passion for teaching outshined her treacherous obstacles

Zainib Al-Jayashi | Design Editor

New city. New school. New students. Moving to a new school is challenging for both students and teachers, but Lincoln Southeast High School's (LSE) newest face in the English department moved 1,154 miles from Panama City Beach, Florida all the way to Lincoln, Nebraska. Despite the obstacles she faced throughout her journey to Nebraska, her passion for education always stayed by her side.

Though her move from Florida seems daunting, moving isn't anything new to Angelea Rice. Rice was born across the world in Frankfurt, Germany, but she and her family moved to the United States (U.S.) before she was one year old. Her move to the U.S. wasn't the last time she would move throughout her life.

"[I] lived in Iowa, Ohio, Nebraska, North Carolina, New Jersey, Alabama, and Florida," Rice said.

The circumstances may have been different for each move, but her journey to different states when she was younger was for one reason. Rice is an "army brat." The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines an army brat as "the child of an officer or an enlisted person in the army." Rice's father was serving the country when she was growing up.

Moving played a big part in her journey, but her passion to teach others shaped her into who she is now. Rice had always had an interest in becoming a teacher of some sort.

"I have always been drawn to teach others, whether it be being a trainer for new employees or playing school teacher with my stuffed animals and dolls when I was a little kid," Rice said.

Rice is currently an English teacher for freshmen and sophomores at LSE. When she was teaching in Florida at two schools called Arnold High School and Bay High School - both located in Panama City Beach, she taught each grade in high school. Though the high

school setting in Lincoln may be a bit different for Rice, she always taught English.

Her passion for teaching correlated with her interest in English as a subject, leading her to the career path of education.

"I always liked being creative in writing and enveloping myself in the worlds and information that books open for you," Rice said.

Rice said that all of the schools she has taught at have their similarities and differences.

At her past schools, Rice encountered students with many personal issues and financial struggles. Sometimes, Rice had to find ways

"I always liked being creative in writing and enveloping myself in the worlds and information that books open for you."

- Angelea Rice

to get to know her students outside of school-related topics, but no matter where she taught, she has always enjoyed her time with students.

"[Students] growing up around the saltwater and a tourist town vs. not [can have an impact], but students are generally the same as they are individuals. [I] find ways to connect to them in their various experiences and struggles in life," Rice said.

Everyone has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in one way or another. For Rice and her move to Nebraska, she found it difficult to get to know all of her students, especially those who were full-time remote learning

students. She also found getting her state teacher license difficult to transfer over to Nebraska because she didn't get her teaching degree in the state. Rice had a few bumps in the road, but she had a great foundation of people helping her out.

"[I] had lots of amazing support and welcoming from staff and students," Rice said. "When you face challenges together, there is a bond that is formed because of the challenges having to be faced together."

Rice's journey to the midwest is no doubt a big move, especially when moving to a completely different region of culture, people and weather. Hurricanes are no stranger to those who live in the southern U.S. In 2018, a devastating hurricane named Hurricane Michael hit the Florida panhandle, the place where Rice and her family previously lived. According to the National Weather Service, Hurricane Michael made landfall as an unprecedented Category 5 hurricane with maximum sustained wind speeds of 140 knots (161 miles per hour). The hurricane's winds and storm surge caused catastrophic damage to people living in the Panama City Beach area. According to World Vision, a humanitarian aid organization, the storm caused an estimated amount of 4.5 billion dollars of property damage. Unfortunately, the hurricane affected Rice's property, and it was one of the factors in her decision to move.

Before the hurricane made landfall in her city, Rice and her family had already been thinking about moving to Nebraska.

"All of my mom's side of the family lives in Lincoln or Beatrice. She hasn't lived close to her family for most of my life, and my son and I never lived by a lot of family. I thought it was good for all of us to experience support close by and have family interactions that last longer than a few weeks," Rice said. "The hur

ricane was just kind of the last sign to push us this way.”

Fortunately for Rice, her house was one of the luckier ones. Rice believes her house had the most damage in her neighborhood, but definitely not the worst in the community.

“The storm ripped off our chimney and most of the siding on one side of our house. We [also] had a huge oak tree in the backyard that fell to the left,” Rice said. “If [the tree] had fallen backward instead of to the left, there is a very good possibility that me, my son (7 years old at the time), and my mother would have been killed because it would have landed on the closet we were huddled in.”

Fortunately, Rice was not taken away by the horrific storm, but that wasn’t the only time she had been put in a scary position during Hurricane Michael.

“When the storm ripped off our chimney and left a big hole in our roof, the water started pouring in. It started pouring in through the light fixtures, so I quickly found things to catch the water coming down. Then, I went upstairs to see what all we had lost/how extensive the damage was,” Rice said. “I ran downstairs to let my mom and son know that I was fine, and I ran into the garage to get a tarp, some nails, and a hammer. I ran back upstairs into the attic and jumped on a beam to reach the hole in the roof. I tried hammering the tarp in place from inside, but the angle and space made it difficult. I knew it had to be done quickly as the water was still pouring in and the storm was still going.”

Rice could’ve left what she was doing and hid with the rest of her family in the closet they were hiding in, but her bravery drove her into trying to stop the water from destroying what they had left.

“I popped my head/half of my body outside the hole and started hammering the tarp down from the outside. When

a big gust of wind would come, I ducked back down and popped back up until almost all of the hole was covered with the tarp. It wasn’t pretty and definitely not my best work, but it did the trick and kept the water out for the duration of the storm,” Rice said.

After the destruction, her experience with the storm led her to help others who were struggling with the outcome of the hurricane.

“We very rarely know or realize what impact we ultimately had on our students and to get brief glimpses at that reaffirms why we do what we do.”

- Angelea Rice



PHOTO COURTESY: ANGELEA RICE
Angelea Rice (right) with her mother and son

She organized an idea that gave students returning to the school she worked at a school bag with notebooks, paper, pens, pencils and other personal hygiene products on their first day back to school.

“They were hurting at the time and supplies were lacking so much that sometimes they didn’t even have those basic things at home,” Rice said.

Rice’s life has been filled with moving to new states, tropical storms, bravery and caring for others. She has been all over, but not once did her passion for teaching leave her side in the 20 years of being a teacher.

“Teaching, like many other professions, isn’t a job that gets a lot of instant gratitude. We don’t generally see what most of our students become that we taught along the years,” Rice said. “We very rarely know or realize what impact we ultimately had on our students and to get brief glimpses at that reaffirms why we do what we do.”

JOSIE DOBSON

Using social media to raise social awareness of the arts

Josie Dobson (11) uses separate social media accounts for different reasons. Is this common for people to do? What does she post on these separate accounts?

Dobson has two social media accounts on Instagram. One is her “main” that is just for posting pictures of herself, family, and friends. She also has another account where she posts about her hobbies, singing, and photos. Her main account is private, so she can choose who she wants to view her posts, and her second account is public so it is open for anyone to see. Users can choose to have their account public or private.

“On my Title (an account for hobbies and activities I do) page, I post all about things I am doing in the community to stay active and promote my platform,” Dobson said. “My platform is ‘Create the Bold, Support the Brave’ - ‘Arts Advocacy.’ So I post things on like National Arts Day and I have some videos on there of me singing, which is my talent for competitions. On my personal account, I do post like random pictures and there are some more singing videos on there as well. I also post pictures from shows and plays I have been in at Southeast! Basically just stuff for my friends and family.”

Dobson tends to post activities that she does or is interested in. She likes taking photos and videos of things she finds interesting, like nature. Her family and friends follow both of her accounts and enjoy watching her post about the things she loves.

“[They] are very supportive, which I love,” Dobson said.

She likes taking her time and taking good quality pictures to post on her Instagram account for her hobbies. As the same for her videos of herself singing, which is a natural talent for her. Scrolling through her Instagram accounts, you can compare and contrast the different types of posts that are done on each separate account. From her phenomenal singing videos, to her lovely pictures, to pictures of herself, friends and family.

Although it seems completely normal for social media users to have separate accounts, surprisingly, many don’t. For example, there are users who have the app Instagram, but do not post much of anything, or even post nothing at all. It is common for the users to “archive” any of their posts, which then removes it so no one can see it any longer.

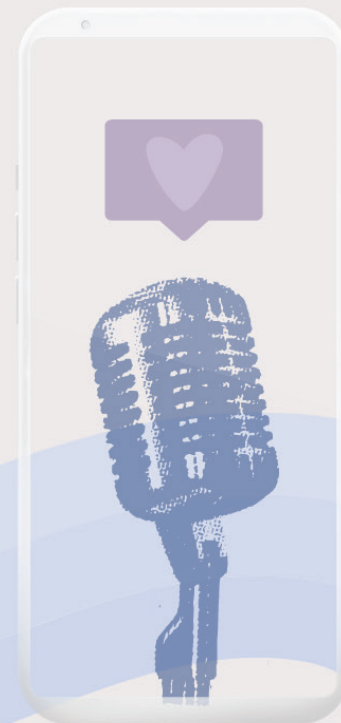
Having lots of followers seems to be a dream for many people, but not for Dobson.

“My goal of being on social media is not for the aspect of gaining followers. Sure followers are nice but my end goal with my title account is to spread my message of why the arts are so important,” Dobson said.

Many people just enjoy being able to share about their hobbies and what they enjoy doing, and don’t mind the amount of followers that they have. On the other hand, it is half and half. Others also enjoy gaining followers and gaining for recognition. It gives a more likely chance to become better known on the internet.

“More followers are always cool but they’re not my goal,” Dobson said.

Social media is fun to use for many people. There are many different ways each user uses it. Dobson shared a great example of a use of separate accounts, with detailed explanation.



Callie Cook | Staff Writer

DIVERSITY IN THE STUDENT BODY

How “stereotype threat” is affecting students’ high school experience

Nicole Tinius | Online Editor

From “Mean Girls” to “The Breakfast Club,” there’s no doubt that generations have been obsessed with placing people into metaphorical boxes. This attraction to grouping people into neat categories based on common prejudices or assumptions is natural, but with the help of social media and entertainment companies, this constant categorizing has become negatively glamourized.

We have all heard of them. The cool (but unintelligent) jock, the weird band nerd and the dumb blonde. Stereotypes and cliques plague not only the halls of high school, but now with the help of technology, the world wide web as well.

In places like high school, where emotions are already running high, the introduction of another aspect to be judged and bullied over doesn’t help anything to say the least. Social-psychological researchers are finding that while stereotypes and cliques are affecting student’s emotions, they are influencing performance in school as well.

In an article from the American Psychological Association (APA), Psychologists Dr. Claude Steele and Dr. Joshua Aronson tested this idea by giving both black and white college students a test, but reminded some students that, “the test diagnosed intellectual ability,” potentially evoking the stereotype that Blacks are less intelligent than Whites.

For the other portion of participants, the test was described to them as a “problem-solving lab task that said nothing about ability.” The change in words was used to render stereotypes as being irrelevant.

As predicted, the Black students in the first group did worse than those in the second all because they were reminded of the stereotypes that Blacks are less intelligent than whites.

It’s clear that this stereotype is false and that there’s no information to prove it to be true, but it’s obvious that regardless of its accuracy, it’s still subconsciously affecting students.

In the same APA article, Steele, Aronson and Dr. Steven Spencer have run many more tests like the one above, proving that “passing reminders that someone belongs to one group or another, such as a group stereotyped as inferior in academics, can wreak havoc with test performance.”

Creating doubts in a student’s ability during high-pressure situations, such as a test, results in what psychologists call “stereotype threat.”

This phenomenon has become more apparent when talking about the effects stereotyping has on students’ education along with the scores students receive on their standardized tests.

This idea of creating doubts has also made its way into multiple supreme court cases. One example is the Supreme Court case Abigail Noel Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin. In this lawsuit, the idea of stereotype threat was recognized and was used to cite the effects of negative stereotypes when looking at education equality as well as the implications stereotypes present when looking at college admissions.

Adding to the awkwardness of high school, the manipulation of grades is showing just how strong the effects of negative cliques and stereotypes can be in school, but not all schools are as defined as those in the movies.

For some, it’s easy to categorize the cliques in high school, however Lincoln Southeast (LSE) proves to have such a diverse student body and fitting into a single stereotype isn’t the norm.

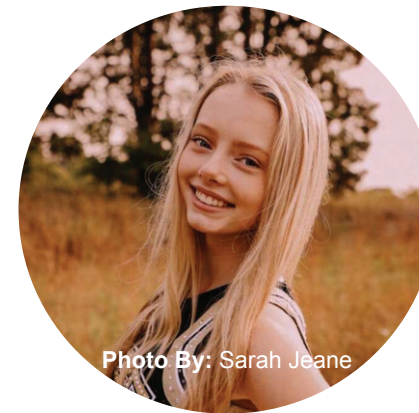


Photo By: Sarah Jeane

ANSLEY SOTHAN More than a pretty face

With her academic record and time commitment to various activities, LSE junior Ansley Sothan is proving that she is more than just a stereotypical pretty face.

Inside of school and out, it’s easy to see that Sothan is busy. Just looking at her involvement with LSE alone, she is on the Shirettes dance team, varsity golf and tennis teams, Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) club, and leadership cadre - all while taking multiple Advanced Placement (AP) classes and making LSE’s honor roll with highest distinction, which is achieved by obtaining a weighted grade point average (GPA) of 4.25 and above (on a 4.0 weighted scale) by semester.

Sothan says that while she is involved in so much and has proven herself academically, many don’t see past her appearance.

“I definitely have been stereotyped, being blonde and on the dance team fits the stereotypical mean girl to a T.”

Unfortunately, it’s not just her classmates that do the stereotyping. There have been instances where teachers have doubted her ability as well.

Her desire to pursue medicine was questioned while she was in uniform, saying that her teacher explained that “nursing is much easier” and that “medical school was ‘too much’.”

Sothan recalls the stereotypes and clique mentalities that underlie such instances negatively affected her early high school years and mental health. “As a freshman I was very insecure and caught up with my social image but the obsession has subsided as I’ve matured,” Sothan said.

She understands that stereotypes are a natural phenomenon, but believes that they can be broken once people stop judging and take time to get to know one another.

“Stereotyping is human nature especially in high school when all of us are trying to find our own way,” Sothan said.

Instead of letting the stereotypes shape her and her future she says they “[make] me work harder to prove the stereotypes wrong.”

Jake Appleget (11) is another student who combats the falsehoods of stereotypes. As a high school football player, Appleget mainly gets stereotyped based on his athletic involvement.

He recognizes that “many athletes are seen as jocks, not as smart, and maybe even a bit mean,” however his academics are proving that athletes can also be intelligent.

“A lot of people in the football and basketball programs, that I know, are a lot more than just the assumed jock or unintelligent scholar. If given the chance, you get to learn a lot more about who these people really are and that goes for all people,” Appleget said.

While participating on LSE’s football, basketball, and baseball teams, he has maintained a non-weighted 3.95 GPA or higher during the season.

Appleget’s academics also recently received recognition as he made the honor roll with high distinction, which acknowledges students with a weighted GPA of 4.0 to 4.249 on a 4.0 weighted scale by semester.

His academic integrity has also been praised as he’s been deemed an All City academic athlete for the three years he has been involved in high school sports.

However, sports isn’t the only thing Appleget is involved in. In his free time, he is apart of the S.H.I.E.L.D. leadership group and LSE’s local Star Wars club.

As for people judging others based on stereotypes and cliques, Appleget says that it’s inevitable. “They will always be there and people will always find theirs. But it is not okay to stereotype people and place them into a certain clique without getting to know them first,” Appleget said.

Photo By: Mike Johnson

JAKE APPLEGET Stronger in more aspects than just athletics



RACHEL ODABASI Talented in more than just music

The overly weird, super geeky band stereotype is a common one that Rachel Odabasi (12) is proving to break.

Her involvement in Marching Band, Wind Ensemble, Varsity Orchestra and Pit Orchestra showcase her love for music. However she has many more talents.

Besides the grueling hours committed to her various musical ensembles, she also finds time to be co-president in Biology Teacher Laurel Schmitz’s Neature Club as well as being a student athlete on the LSE Varsity Tennis team. Outside of school, Odabasi embraces her inner fashionista while working at Von Maur and paints planting pots to add a touch of color to her world.

Depending on the season, her hobbies and interests can take anywhere from roughly 20 hours a week in the fall to over 20 hours in the spring.

She says that while she partakes in many different activities, she is usually stereotyped as a classic band nerd.

“When people know that I’m involved in instrumental music before they actually meet me, they expect me to fit the cliché of what a band kid is thought to be,” Odabasi said.

While this is anything but the truth, it has led Odabasi to believe that the typical stereotypes and cliques affect what people are wanting to explore or get involved in.

“If the stereotype of an activity “isn’t cool,” then why would people want to do it?” Odabasi said.

The added clique mentality associated with activities could also sway some groups to think they are better than others.

“I associate exclusion and a social hierarchy with clique mentality when it pertains to stereotypes. This is mainly because the stereotypes of many activities involve the putting down of other activities,” Odabasi said.

Because of this Odabasi says, “I definitely try my best to meet everyone with an open mind.”

Photo By: Sonnenblume Studios



THE 97%

A study by YouGov revealed that 97 percent of women between the ages of 18-24 have experienced sexual harassment or violence at some scale

Graphic by: Fatima Al-Jayashi

Meg Rajala | Photo Editor & Social Media Team

After the kidnapping and killing of Sarah Everard by a male police officer on March 3, 2021, a sample study done by YouGov of over 1,000 women in the UK revealed that 97 percent of women between the ages of 18-24 have experienced sexual harassment or violence at some scale. Although the study was based in the UK, it has become representative of women globally. Most people may not even realize that a close friend or someone in their class is part of the 97 percent. With such a high percentage of women experiencing harassment and violence the patriarchy, or societal belief that power should be held by men, is inherently at play with the difference in how men and women are raised and continues to play in the reaction to the 97 percent statistic being released.

From the time most women are born and for their entire lives, they are taught to take extra precautions such as carrying pepper spray, covering themselves up and not getting too drunk or high while these expectations are never set on men. Women are taught to do whatever they can to avoid being harassed instead of teaching others not to harass women.

Avery Bauereis (11), an active member of LSE's Feminist Club, has taken note of these differences between how her and her older brother were raised.

"I've been taught to not be out late at night and make sure I'm around people I trust and my brother was just never taught that," Bauereis said.

Despite all of these precautions being taught, 97 percent of women are still experiencing harassment and violence. When women share their harassment stories it generally calls into question what the woman was doing that led to the assault rather than believing she wasn't

responsible for being assaulted.

Tressa TeKolste, a teacher at Lincoln Southeast (LSE), who teaches Women's Literature, has allowed her students to share personal experiences to better educate men on the realities of growing up as a woman in today's society. In addition, TeKolste has used her role as a teacher to better educate and raise awareness on the impact of the patriarchy.

"Feminism and (in)equality are things that impact us daily but they're more subconscious and subliminal," TeKolste said.

Due to much of the impact from the patriarchy and feminism being subliminal it becomes difficult for people to recognize. For example, parents using phrases like "boys will be boys" to excuse boys' behaviour from a young age and naturally expecting girls to behave better further feeds into the harmful cycle of the patriarchy.

"Men aren't generally taught to respect women so they grow up thinking they can get away with everything and they usually can," Bauereis said.

The inherently sexist and unequal expectations set on women and how they are raised in society further deprives men of the ability to learn about their privilege and use it to support women. Instead of men taking the time to better understand women's struggles and listen to their personal experiences, they react defensively and claim that women are exaggerating or doing it for attention.

An almost immediate reaction to the 97 percent statistic being released was many people, more specifically men, coining the harmful phrase "Not All Men" in hopes to defend men and make the point that not all men have harassed or been violent towards women.

Others began to argue that

the issue isn't that not all men are harassing women, the issue is that almost all women have experienced harassment.

"Men think they're not a part of the issue when they are, even if they've never personally assaulted anyone," Bauereis said.

In addition to the phrase "Not all Men" the privilege of men showed as many of them began to question the validity of the 97 percent statistic claiming it was inaccurate and that it was unlikely for that many women to be harassed and assaulted.

TeKolste, who considers herself part of the 97 percent, said "we hear the word harassment and we have this very narrow understanding but when we widen it to what harassment and assault can look like- from benevolent misogyny to the Sarah Everard [when Everard was kidnapped and murdered by a male police officer] situation, it's a very wide spectrum which is why the number is so high."

If men took the time to understand that the 97 percent statistic accounts for such a wide spectrum of what harassment and assault means, it would allow others to better understand instead of reacting defensively.

Growing up in a patriarchal and misogynistic society that raises men and women differently plays a role in the 97 percent statistic being so high. In addition the natural privilege of men showed in their reaction and disbelief when the 97 percent statistic was released. Although the statistic primarily affects women, if men were willing to take a stand realize they have the power to help and speak in support of women, society can work towards lowering the 97 percent and making the world a better place for all people.

SELLING SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS OF LSE

Erin Geschwender | Design Editor

While many people have a hobby or interest they are passionate about, few are able to find a way to make it profitable. According to research by nonprofit Junior Achievement and accounting firm Ernst and Young Limited Liability Partnership, 61 percent of teen girls and 54 percent of teen boys have

considered starting a business. Despite this, only 10 percent have followed through. This is due, in large part, to the fear of failure and the uncertainty of how to get started.

“Many teens have a great interest in starting their own business someday, but the risks associated with entrepreneurship are a major

concern for them,” President and CEO of Junior Achievement USA Jack Kowsakowski said.

Despite the challenges that come with starting a business, two Lincoln Southeast High School (LSE) students, junior Jacob Axelsson and senior Emma Gammel, have done just that.

JACOB AXELSON :

Axelsson started creating websites for businesses in 2018. “I primarily got into coding because of honest boredom. I was always looking for something to do on my off time,” he said.

Axelsson originally began creating websites by trying to make his own and eventually shifted to system administration.

“[To create websites] I tend to use Javascript frameworks for the more fancy stuff and just HTML and CSS for static pages,” Axelsson said.

He did not originally plan to turn his website creation hobby into a business.

“[It was] my infinite problem with being way too bored. I thought, why not make some money off it,” Axelsson said.

24 “I just wanted to make some

spare cash to fund my hobbies.”

Although Axelsson does not plan to make coding his full time career he does plan to continue for the foreseeable future.

“I think most of this is going to continue being a side hustle to make the fun money after hitting bills,” Axelsson said.

When starting his business Axelsson said the hardest part was getting clients.

“[I] spread primarily by word of mouth around Lincoln,” he said.

In addition to word of mouth Axelsson now uses a “hire me” page on a personal site as his means of advertising.

Axelsson emphasizes time management as a crucial aspect of running a business.

“Deadlines are important or

you will procrastinate; I will work for so long and not realize it,” Axelsson said.

Just like any other business owner, Axelsson has faced struggles as well, sometimes having to work long nights due to unexpected changes requested by a client. Despite the challenges, Axelsson stays motivated by being able to spend the money he makes on his hobbies and knowing that he has made a difference for his clients.

Axelsson offers advice to students considering starting their own business.

“Be willing to burn the boat,” Axelsson said. “Have a ‘no going back’ kind of mindset so you can survive the hard times.”

EMMA GAMMEL :

Gammel spends much of her time painting, and she started her business taking art commissions during the summer of 2020, but has been doing art for a significant portion of her life. Her love of art arose from a teacher she had when she was younger.

“Around Elementary school, I had an art teacher named Mrs. A, and she was the greatest teacher ever,” Gammel said. “I’ve always been into art from that point on.”

Although Gammel has had a longtime interest in art, the pandemic is what really pushed her to pursue it seriously due to her sudden increase in free time.

When Gammel began painting more frequently, she did not originally plan to sell her art. “It was just for fun at first,” Gammel said. “Then my family and people from work were saying ‘you should definitely start selling them and taking commissions.’”

Typically when making a commission, clients send her a reference photo as well as specifics they want for their piece. Though it varies from client to client, Gammel said she en-

joys when she is given creative freedom. “It’s the nicest thing to hear as an artist, really,” she said.

Selling commissions comes with its own set of challenges. Sometimes clients will ask her to fix parts of an already var-

“**SOMETIMES YOU GET IN YOUR OWN HEAD AND THINK YOU’RE NOT GOOD ENOUGH.**

- Emma Gammel (12)

nished painting.

“The hardest part is people are too critical,” Gammel said. “Sometimes you get in your own head and think you’re not good enough.”

Although she faces challenges, Gammel continues to stay motivated.

“My parents are my biggest supporters,” Gammel said. “Every time I get done with a piece, I’ll come out and I’ll show them and they say, ‘oh my gosh, it’s so good you should really keep going.’”

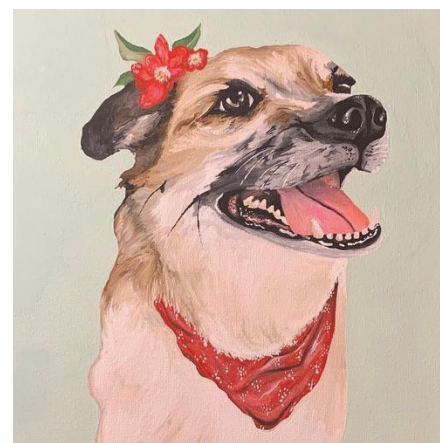
In the future, Gammel is unsure whether or not she will turn this into a full time job.

“It’s kind of like a back-up plan,” Gammel said. “I know that I want to do something creative. Specifically, I’ve always wanted to be an art teacher, elementary, or just art education in general.”

When running a business Gammel said it is important “to set a schedule on what you need to get done. Make sure you’re giving yourself mental breaks so that you don’t become burnt out.”

“[If you are thinking about starting a business] do it, don’t let anything hold you back,” Gammel said. “You may not think you will sell anything but, [there will be] one person who will be interested and that person will reach to other people. There’s no reason you shouldn’t chase after your dreams, you only live once.”

Art by: Emma Gammel





The how and why Lincoln Southeast students are being vaccinated.

Emily Stoner | Photo Editor & Social Media Team

Graphics by: Erin Geschwender and Emily Stoner

It's been over a year since COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization. Since then, COVID-19 has changed lives all over the world, and has made the past year stressful and difficult. With quarantine and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and mask mandates, normalcy was lost in and out of school. After going online in March of 2020 for safety, Lincoln Public School's high schools came back to school in the fall with a half in-person, half online attendance plan. As local COVID-19 rates decreased, seniors were able to come back full time attending school in-person starting February 2021. In the following month, all grade levels were able to come back to school. With schools returning to near full capacity and increasing vaccination ability, many aspects of life are feeling more normal again.

When the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were first approved for Emergency Use Authorization, many people weren't sure how quickly the vaccines would be available to people, especially those in younger age groups. However, on March 29, people 18 and up in the state of Nebraska

became eligible to be vaccinated. Quickly after, on April 5, those 16 and up also became eligible. With increasing eligibility, the amount of high school students who have been half or fully vaccinated has also increased. Lincoln Southeast (LSE) senior Brooklyn Burner was able to get vaccinated through her work, which made her eligible early and offered a bonus to encourage vaccinations. For Burner, getting an appointment to be vaccinated was pretty easy.

"I had no idea I could even get it," Burner said. "I got mine the next day."

However, getting the vaccine hasn't been so simple for many other LSE Students. Many students are either below the age of 16 and have no approved vaccine options, or are old enough but unable to find an appointment to be vaccinated. As of April of 2021, studies are being done on the age range and efficacy of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, but neither have been approved for ages below 16.

LSE student Kimbal McClure (9), would love to be vaccinated, but is too young.

"I want to get vaccinated because I am high risk. I'm a type one diabetic," McClure said. "That gives

me a little bit of an urge to want it."

Although McClure is too young to be vaccinated right now, she is hopeful that a vaccine will be approved for her age group soon.

"I'm hoping, because Pfizer has something going on, that hopefully the FDA approves it for my age," McClure said.

For McClure, COVID-19 safety over the past year has been important for her to stay healthy.

"In the beginning I was double masking for a while, and trying to keep my distance with a lot of people," McClure said. "I've just been trying to stick to all the guidelines that they give you."

Now, as more people get vaccinated McClure has felt a bit more safe, but is also worried that some people may get too comfortable with a new sense of protection from COVID-19.

"I feel a little bit safer, but also... I feel like people will feel too safe. Because people that haven't had the vaccine are like, 'oh it's fine, everybody's vaccinated', even though not everybody has it yet," McClure said. "I feel like people are kind of easing off now, when we should still be wearing masks, and following all the rules."

As vaccinations continue to

be administered, it's easy to start thinking about what the near future will look like. After over a year of COVID-19, these vaccines may be the light at the end of the tunnel in terms of how much life has changed.

"I'm hoping everyone gets vaccinated soon because I'm ready to be done [with COVID-19]," McClure said. "Whenever you can get your vaccine, you should get your vaccine... it's important."

Burner, who got her second dose of the Pfizer vaccine in early April said, "The first [dose], nothing really happened, my arm just hurt for a few days, but the second one, I just got super tired... [but] it's a normal thing. You can fight it."

After getting both doses of her vaccine, Burner is also looking forward to the end of COVID-19 precautions and quarantine.

"I'm happy this is all getting over with, because it's kind of getting annoying. It [has] ruined a lot of things," Burner said.

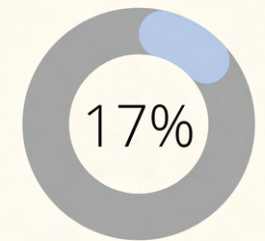
Burner recommends that people and students get their vaccine over with, "Just do your part," Burner said.

As studies on the various vaccines continue, and eligibility and availability increase, the amount of vaccines administered in the U.S. will hopefully continue to grow. As of April 18, nearly 40 percent of the total population in the U.S.

has received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine according to the CDC. In addition, with 209 million total doses being administered to this point, the future is bright in terms of receiving vaccines, and hopefully further vaccine approvals regarding age.

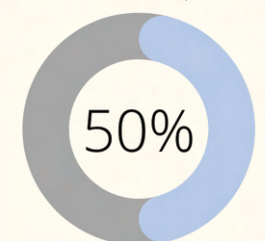
So, despite how hard this past year has been in dealing with a global pandemic, vaccines have become available to many, and will substantially impact the COVID-19 numbers in the U.S., as well as the LSE community. No matter the age, belief or reasoning, the COVID-19 approved vaccines will have a substantial impact on how COVID-19 affects the future. Further information about the COVID-19 vaccines, data and appointment availability can be found at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Have LSE Students received a COVID-19 vaccine (4/5/21)



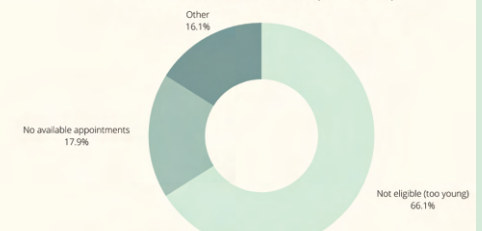
Results of a public survey done on the LSE Instagram page 4/5/21, 167 students participated.

Have LSE Students received a COVID-19 vaccine (4/30/21)



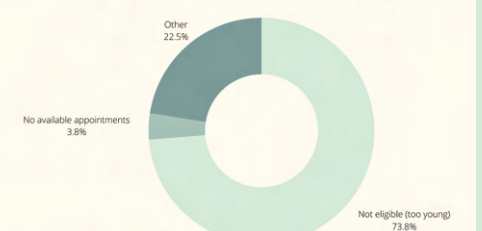
Results of a public survey done on the LSE Instagram page 4/30/21, 179 students participated.

Why LSE Students haven't received a COVID-19 vaccine (4/5/21)



Results of a public survey done on the LSE Instagram page 4/5/21, 112 students participated.

Why LSE Students haven't received a COVID-19 vaccine (4/30/21)



Results of a public survey done on the LSE Instagram page 4/30/21, 80 students participated.

"I'm hoping everyone gets vaccinated soon because I'm ready to be done [with COVID-19]. Whenever you can get your vaccine, you should get your vaccine... it's important." - Kimbal McClure (9)

BEING “ESSENTIAL” ISN’T EASY

Life as a grocery worker during a pandemic

Samuel Abourezk | Staff Writer

LSE senior Ray Ramos has worked at Leon’s Gourmet Grocer for two years. Ramos worked before, during and after the COVID-19 lockdowns. He worked during the meat and toilet paper shortages, the hoarding of essential goods, and the disease’s multiple spikes in infectivity.

The incorrect usage of masks has been a threat to grocery workers attempting to keep themselves safe. Some customers refuse to wear them, others will wear them incorrectly and some will choose to wear masks that provide no medical protection whatsoever. The selfishness of unreasonable customers often results in them being kicked out of the store.

“We’ve had our bosses either escort them out, or check them out immediately, trying to get them out as fast as possible to make sure they’re not in the store,” Ramos said.

The eccentricity of the human spirit is seen in the radically diverse assortment of masks people wear. Ramos has seen every mask imaginable. He remembers a customer wearing a Batman mask. It wasn’t a movie prop’s level of quality, but it was instead a mask made entirely out of plastic, with two holes where a singular string would connect through, and a coin slot vent for the wearer’s labored respiration.

Ramos remembers another customer wearing an N95 mask with holes intentionally punched into it. The mask had “TV news is fake, COVID is fake, don’t let them lie to you,” scribbled into it. Ramos only realized the tattered nature of the mask when the customer came up to the register. He told the customer that he couldn’t wear a damaged mask into Leon’s, and that the next time he comes into the store, he is going to need to wear a legitimate mask. The customer then began to ramble conspiracies under his breath, muttering about how masks are going to kill you, about how you’re going to breathe in your own CO₂, suffocate, and then die.



Ramos said to the customer, “Sir, I wear this eight hours a day. The masks are completely fine. I haven’t died from it. I’ve been doing this for months. I’m going to need you to wear one to come back to the store. And if you do come back to the store, I’m not going to allow you to buy anything.”

The customer then walked off with the rest of his items. Ramos remembers another customer wearing a mask that said “Forced to Wear.” He also remembers another customer wearing a mask that said “Trump Is Still My President” after the inauguration of President Joe Biden.

Beyond the outlandish and absurd masks, there are more ordinary offenses commonly committed. Ramos regularly sees customers enter the store with their noses above their masks. He also sees customers enter the store without a mask, only to put it on a few footsteps into the store. Some individuals will bring the top of their shirt collar up to their mouth, and will imitate the mask wearing of the species around them. Ramos says that he is annoyed by negligent behavior around masks. Customers will come up to the register, and in an attempt to sound more coherent in conversation, will lower their mask, exposing themselves to the open air and also exposing those around them to the disease that they could possibly have.

“The whole point of that Plexiglas is to make sure that the person doesn’t spread [COVID-19] it to me, and they turn and lean to the side and pull their mask down and try talking to me. The whole point of that Plexiglas is to make sure that you don’t do that,” Ramos said.

The respect given to essential workers is double, according to Ramos. On one hand, customers appreciate the labor of essential workers more, because they have been revealed to uphold our country amidst the chaos of the pandemic. On the other hand, the disrespect given to essential workers before the pandemic used to be given in insults and incivility, but now, is also given in the form of gross negligence around health regulations, which is a disrespect that is lethal to workers.

Ramos says that he now has more respect for essential workers, and that because of COVID-19, he has come to respect all jobs for the ways in which they contribute, regardless of how much they are paid.

“I see [essential workers] as a lot more valuable than before COVID. I’ve had multiple people come up and say, ‘I thank you for what you do,’ and, ‘For what you risk and what you do every day, thank you.’ It’s definitely changed my worldview on minimum wage jobs. I have learned that they’re way more valuable to the economy than a lot of other jobs,” Ramos said.

Ramos believes that it is vital for essential workers to receive the vaccine. He believes that our country owes a debt

to its essential workers for the sacrifices to their health that they have made. He himself received the vaccine early for working in a grocery store. Before he had received the vaccine, he feared not only for his own health, but also for the health of his parents, and for his grandmother who he regularly delivered food to.

“A lot of the people I know are starting to get the vaccine, especially in my age group. A lot of the older people I know as well, like my grandparents, had the vaccine about a month ago, which is very good. I don’t have to worry about them getting it anymore. I am very happy about that,” Ramos said.

Leon’s Gourmet Grocer and Ramos went through difficulties during the food and toilet paper shortages at the beginning of the pandemic. The shelves were empty and the lines stretched on and on. An apocalypse seemingly occurred, all hushed and orderly, so as not to disturb the people’s ethical intentions of patiently waiting in lines. The pandemic floated invisibly throughout the air, while the customers at Leon’s gathered supplies for the coming months of motionless solitude.

Cutting in lines betrays a visible social taboo, while hoarding supplies and preventing the elderly and disabled from access to supplies is a much more complicated decision for consumers to make. For consumers, hoarding is a method of preserving and assuring the best odds of survival for themselves at the cost of others, which is a sacrifice some were prepared to make.

“I think that the hoarding was selfish because you didn’t need that much. I understand going out and getting it occurred because you didn’t want to have the chance of getting COVID. But then they would go out next week, and hoard it again. And

then the next week and hoard again, and the next week and hoard again. And it would stop the elderly from getting certain things that they wanted. The flour that we ran out of, the toilet paper that we ran out of, it was hard for us to get a lot of those things. It was a very selfish thing for a lot of people to do.

“My grandmother needed food and hand wipes. She wasn’t able to get it because she was asking me to deliver for her ... I said to her, ‘We don’t have these things. I can’t buy them for you, I physically can’t get it for you.’ Then it set it in for me that we simply don’t have those things anymore,” Ramos said.

Convenience for consumers is a goal that grocery companies seek to hit. After years of duplicates and triplicates of products habitually on the shelf, there was nothing left by the hoarders for the rest to buy.

Certain commodities possess different values to different people. A woman at Leon’s bought all of the Hamm’s beer that they had. She declared that she was on an expedition throughout all of Lincoln, and that she intended to collect all of the Hamm’s beer.

“I had some guy come in the back room, and he’s like,

‘Dude, she’s buying all the Hamms beer.’ And I’m like, ‘What do you mean?’ I walked out and I’m like, ‘She’s doing it. She’s buying it all,’” Ramos said.

Ramos has endured through Halloween, hole-punched, and election denial masks. Ramos and his relatives are now vaccinated against COVID-19. Endurance through the pandemic will become a universal story, one told by Ramos, and soon collectively told by those who have made it through.

“I see [essential workers] as a lot more valuable than before COVID ... I have learned that they’re way more valuable to the economy than a lot of other jobs.”
-Ray Ramos



DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

LSE students bring stories to life through D&D club

Henry Graham | Staff Writer



Graphic by: Canva

Imagine being able to create your own world, full of people, quests, and epic items, all from your brain. Now imagine other people exploring your world while you guide them through it, with you controlling everything that they go up against. They could be astronauts, and you, their mission control, making sure they get through their journey safely; or you could create a torturous dungeon for your players to try and break free from, while you send traps and puzzles and monstrous enemies to stop them. This is the role-playing game Dungeons and Dragons.

Dungeons and Dragons was created in 1974, by Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, and is still played around the world to this day. The game is even played at Lincoln Southeast High School (LSE). The Dungeons and Dragons Club was started in 2020 by Seth Walker, a Special Education teacher at LSE.

"I have been playing D&D for about three years," Walker said. "For me, Dungeons and Dragons is a way for me to express my creativity. It allows me to get away from the real world for a couple hours."

Another staff member in D&D Club is Jesse Reynolds, a Social Studies teacher at LSE.

"I first played D&D when my children started playing a few years ago and asked me to participate," Reynolds said. "I quickly connected to the role-playing aspect of the game and thought that it could be beneficial for practicing empathy and understanding."

Dungeons and Dragons is dif-

ferent from other games in that it is a tabletop, pen and paper game, where you control your character, while the dungeon master controls the rest of the game, and all of the other characters not controlled by a player. Something that makes

“DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS IS A WAY FOR ME TO EXPRESS MY CREATIVITY. IT ALLOWS ME TO GET AWAY FROM THE REAL WORLD FOR A COUPLE HOURS.

-Seth Walker

D&D special is that you control all aspects of your character, not just combat or conversation, but also what food you order in a restaurant, what color socks you wear, and what languages you speak.

"In essence, you have to completely enter the mindset of your character and make all of the decisions for them," Reynolds said.

Another important aspect of

D&D is its use of dice. When you make a decision, you need to roll a specific die that decides how well you did on that action, and the higher you roll, the better you do. For example, if you were to throw something at a target, you would need to roll a die. If you got a 10 or lower you would miss, but higher than 10 you would hit.

When asked to describe the game, Reynolds said "Much of the game and your success within it relies on chance in the form of rolling dice. Even the best envisioned plan can go wrong or the dumbest idea might work out perfectly in your favor, depending on the outcome of your roll. That adds another level to the game where you just never know how things will work out and it keeps things exciting."

Dungeons and Dragons isn't only a fun game to play with friends, it's also a good way to practice your social skills and decision making.

"Without question I fully believe that everyone can benefit from playing D&D," Reynolds said. "The roleplaying aspect of the game forces players to see the whole world through a different set of eyes than their own. You have to think how your character would respond to things, not just how you would respond to them. That is practicing empathy. Practicing empathy through role-playing is an exercise in understanding people who are different from us and there is nothing more important in the world than that."

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM



How electronics have played a role
in learning during the
COVID-19 pandemic

Mason Apking | Online Editor
Graphic By: Erin Geschwender

Students and staff have had to adapt in many ways due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the use of technology in the classroom has only become more prevalent. With the use of many resources like Zoom and Google Classroom, some students feel like they might be overwhelmed with schoolwork.

Grace Nelson, a senior and current Student Council President, uses her Chromebook for as few assignments as she can. She finds a lot of great online resources for learning, but whenever she can, she goes old-school. For example, she loves using the eBook versions of her textbooks, but if a physical copy is easily available to her, she uses it.

"I use the eBook versions of my textbooks when doing homework on the way to golf meets," Nelson said.

With the rise of technology, students can now enter a word into a search bar and get an all-in-one dictionary and thesaurus, or search an entire database of articles for something in particular. For English and Photojournalism teacher, Greg Spangler, the introduc-

tion of Chromebooks five years ago was a good idea for writing, but not much else. "I like using more lessons that don't require students to use their chromebook," Spangler said. Before the introduction of Chromebooks, Spangler would have to reserve a computer lab for each of his classes. He would have to reserve the lab multiple times throughout a month. With all of the classes needing the lab, it was hard to find a time that would work for everyone. However, now that the Chromebooks have been implemented, he no longer needs to teach the curriculum around the renting of a computer lab. But just like life, you cannot have something without giving up something else.

"I believe that we are exposing ourselves and students to way too much screen time," Spangler said.

Spangler pointed out the fact that outside of the classroom, screens are primarily used for entertainment. A study taken by Common Sense Media in 2019 found that teens spend an average of 7 hours and 22 minutes consuming screen media. Unfortunately, teachers and students have come to rely on digital resources due to health procedures put in place to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, assignments that would have originally been done by hand and turned in on paper are now done in a digital format on Google Classroom.

Nathan Myers, a physical science teacher at Southeast, has reported negative health effects from being on his computer more than ever before. At the end of the day, his eyes are very tired, and occasionally he gets headaches from looking at his computer screen. Other Southeast teachers have reported various incidents of neck pain, back pain, shoulder pain, carpal tunnel, and obesity. There are many ways to combat these different issues. But most of them include less screen time. However, it is the teachers' job to teach and the student's job to learn. In this case, neither have the option to stop using their computer.

"Chromebooks should never be seen as the be-all-end-all of education" - Nathan Myers

Many teachers prefer that their students write their notes down on pen and paper. This is due to the many studies that have been done in years past, most of which conclude that writing down your notes helps you retain the information better than those who type their notes. Yet another thing that students cannot do because of the ongoing pandemic.

Lincoln Public Schools, in conjunction with the Lancaster County Health Department, implemented various health procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the biggest changes was the implementation of the 50/50 schedule from the first day of school. The plan required that students who were at home for that half of the week would Zoom into classes and complete work at home via the Google Suite of tools.

Since then, the 50/50 schedule has been repealed and students are now back full time, excluding the students who have opted in as full-time "Zoomers". With the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine, teachers and students hope that they can all go back to school as it was a year ago. Teachers have had plenty of time to find new forms of teaching and online resources. Some argue that some of the new online resources that people have found may never go away.

UNIQUE HOBBIES AT SOUTHEAST

Nathan Damme | Staff Writer

ERIC HOLT

Lincoln Southeast Highschool's (LSE) Composition and Horror Literature teacher Eric Holt picks up his electric bass, checks his strings and makes sure he is plugged in. He then starts to play a bassline. As he continues to play, his bandmates around him pick up, adding their own pieces in, creating a strong metal beat. Holt in his freetime away from teaching enjoys listening to and creating metal music, and that is his own unique hobby.

Holt used to run a band with his cousin and friend but stopped due to COVID-19. That didn't stop his love for metal though, as Holt is still a metal enthusiast and enjoys listening frequently. These themes can often push people away, with them being so deep and often scary - don't worry though.

"People outside of the horror and metal communities tend to think we're scary, but almost everyone I've met in these communities are kind, generous, and funny," Holt said. "Liking intense, scary things doesn't make you an intense, scary person."

Holt has another odd hobby too. He enjoys writing and publishing short horror stories. Writing has always been something he has found interest in, reading and writing from a very young age and still into his adult life. Reading is one of Holt's oldest hobbies, with writing coming in at a close second. Holt has been writing since middle school, but only last year during the pandemic did he have time to try to get his writing published. Metal music has also been a part of Holt's life for a long time, going back into highschool.

"I've been interested in metal and experimental music since high school. When I was a teenager, I used to put on a death metal CD after school and scream along to it in my bedroom," Holt said.



PHOTO COURTESY: Eric Holt
Eric Holt (right) playing the bass.

KYA BRANCH

LSE has many students and teachers who have their own interests and hobbies. Kya Branch (9), a student at LSE, runs a podcast with her friends. "It is so much more fun than you could imagine. We basically just get to sit around and talk to each other for about an hour and record it," Branch said.

With Branch and her friends going to different schools after 8th grade, this podcast is a great way for her to spend time with these friends. The best part is they have people who listen and enjoy their podcasts.

"We actually have a pretty large group of adults that enjoy listening," Branch said. "It's called Teen Life with Cole, Kaci and Kya. You can find it on Apple Podcast or anywhere you get your podcasts."



PHOTO COURTESY: Kya Branch
Kya Branch (left) and her friends sit around their studio before recording.

LAUREL SCHMITZ

Quirky hobbies can be found over all sorts of subjects and people. LSE science teacher Laurel Schmitz recently started fermenting foods at home. Fermentation is when you take a food with yeast and take away oxygen, forcing the yeast to make energy without it. While doing so the yeast releases lactic acid which causes fermentation, which can change the flavors of the food. Some examples may be sauerkraut or yogurt. Schmitz said fermenting was the perfect hobby for her, as it mixed some of her favorite interests - science and cooking.

"Fermenting foods means you really do have a science experiment running on your kitchen counter," Schmitz said. Fermenting food is a fun hobby, which can take time but be really rewarding. While fermenting foods is quite interesting, it takes some hard work and caution.

"The most important part of fermentation is to make sure you sterilize the materials you will use by boiling them in water. This allows you to kill off any pathogens that might be contaminating the jar. Likewise, before eating your fermented foods, you must make sure the pH level of the liquid is in the proper range. You need to check that the pH level is at a range that won't allow harmful bacteria and yeast to grow," Schmitz said.

Everybody has interests, something they like or things they enjoy. Passing time with your favorite hobby is always a great way to do it. Spend time with friends, explore other interests and experiment, find what you love to do, and enjoy it, no matter how unique it may be.



PHOTO COURTESY: Laurel Schmitz
Schmitz's fermented food.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP LINCOLN

THE ORGANIZATION THAT DEVELOPS STRONG LEADERS FOR A STRONGER LINCOLN

Chloe Fitzgibbon | Copy Editor

In 1986, community leaders gathered to discuss how they can improve the future of the city Lincoln, Nebraska. There, they collectively decided that it was a necessity to have a group of individuals who believed in their community, wanted everyone in the community to succeed in it and were willing and ready to serve.

The nonprofit organization Leadership Lincoln was born and now works to find these people.



The YLL team from left to right: Program Director Laura Uridil, Executive Director Brendon Evans, Program Coordinator Lily Sughrue

Today, nearly 3,500 people have graduated from the year-long program and have benefitted Lincoln with an estimated \$3.5 million worth of volunteer work.

Youth Leadership Lincoln (YLL) is the portion that scopes out young leaders to get Lincoln's citizens involved in civic engagement earlier on in life. According to the YLL website, the group was originally partly funded by a man who loved giving back to his community, Larry Arth. He did this because he "believed that the key to keeping young people in the city of Lincoln was to give them a voice and teach them at an early age they can make a difference."

As a high school student at Lincoln High in 1996, Laura Uridil applied to be a part of the first ever YLL cohort. After deciding to attend college out of state, Uridil arrived there expecting to receive many opportunities to volunteer and learn about the city she was getting an education from. However, as she looked for things to get involved in, she was disappointed to realize that many people there didn't expect that and weren't as interested in getting to know the town they were involved in as she was.

"It kind of made it concrete for me that I had experienced something in school that made my view of the world a little bit different than other people," Uridil said. "It wasn't until I went to college, that I realized I had some unique opportunities and I did some unique things that give me a perspective

and an expectation of how I exist in the world that not everybody else has."

After college, Uridil was still uncertain about what she wanted to do in life, and had made her way back to Lincoln for a short period. During her stay, she attended a wedding where she reconciled with former YLL cohort members of Uridil's time, as well as her former Program Coordinator, Dean Finnegan, who had then moved on to be the President of the organization. Uridil and Finnegan discussed her uncertainty about her future, and that was when Finnegan offered her a temporary job as her assistant. From there, the job became a little less temporary and Uridil slowly began to work her way up, meanwhile realizing that Lincoln really was her town and this was the career path she wanted to do.

A couple years later, Lincoln Southeast High School (LSE) graduate Lily Sughrue was a manager at the local coffee shop, The Mill, where she would often chat with the former Executive Director of YLL, Mick Hale. The two formed a friendship off of his timely visits to the one of few locations Sughrue worked at. It was there where Sughrue made it apparent her love for helping children and nonprofit work. They discussed her past experience, including working as a paraeducator at LSE, participating in unified sports and working as a counselor at a summer camp in Easter Seals, Nebraska. A year later, Hale contacted Sughrue to inform her that they had an opening, and she officially became the YLL Program Coordinator.

These encounters are what led to the team that Sughrue and Uridil make today, along with their current Executive Director, Brendon Evans.

YLL brings students from all different schools and backgrounds together to conjoin different perspectives about where people

are coming from, and to also build networks between different schools and students.



are coming from, and to also build networks between different schools and students.

"So you know that if you want to go out and do something big you have connections all over the city of Lincoln," Sughrue said.

Sughrue also believes that an important part of YLL is to gain a better understanding of the community that one lives in.

"We do that and have to learn about all sorts of different systems that work together to make the community great, but also understand what still needs to be improved so that you know it works for everyone," she said.

YLL is a year-long program that is open to incoming sophomores, and selects its members based off of applications that are sent in before a certain due date [this year the applications for the YLL 25' cohort were due May 3, 2021]. The organization is aware that most of the leaders wanting to be involved in the group are also very busy people, so the schedule is created to be a small time commitment. The full year typically consists of a day long seminar, once a month, that takes place over the course of a school day.

The year is kicked off with a retreat mainly for the purpose of bonding the members



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YLL Alumni Sara Al-Rishawi speaks up at the LPS Bond issue in early 2020



together. Aside from this year, everyone typically spends the night at the campsite.

“My favorite thing is always the opening retreat because every year you get to start to meet 40 new people who are excited about living in Lincoln, and they want to meet each other and build relationships,” Uridil said. “So it’s always a lot of high energy and just excitement and potential every year as we start the new class.”

Youth Leadership Lincoln (YLL) is in its 24th year and Lincoln Southeast students among its membership say the experience is worthwhile.

This year’s group is wrapping up a successful year despite a few adjustments due to the pandemic. Among the experiences, students met with city government leaders, visited the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts at UNL, and took part in many volunteer opportunities such as Gifts of Love [an organization that provides gifts for those in need of].

YLL 24 cohort member and sophomore at LSE Liem Wills thinks they did well at adapting to the difficulties of the year.

38 “They did a great job keep-

ing everything COVID safe, while still being engaging,” Wills said. “We had to go on Zoom for a while, but even then, there wasn’t much change from when it was in-person. They also made sure it was always inclusive of everyone, whether people were joining the seminars virtually or in-person.”

Senior Sara Al-Rishawi was a member of the YLL 22 cohort and had a particularly enjoyable experience. She says that her time spent there has helped her get to where she is now.

“YLL gave me opportunities to network with a lot of amazing people that opened doors for me to grow professionally,” Al-Rishawi said.

Wills also found YLL as a useful tool in giving her a headstart in her future goals.

“I met a lot of new people in the community who can help me in the future,” Wills said. “For example, during one of our seminars we got a tour of Brian Health, and now I’m going to be able to use the people we talked to as a resource for job shadowing or whatever when I want to start looking at possible careers in the medical field.”

Al-Rishawi gives credit to YLL for her success in speaking about the Lincoln Public Schools bond issue with BCOM solutions earlier in 2020.

“YLL has helped me grow out of my shell and allowed for me to push myself to go after opportunities that come my way,” she said. “The bond issue was a cool event to be able to participate in and just show myself to the community. It was also the first time that I had to speak to a group of people to get them to do something [which was vote for the bond] and it was a nice experience to have for a 16 year old.”

Al-Rishawi would like to recommend incoming sopho-

mores apply to YLL and leave an important message on how to approach it.

“Take it seriously,” Al-Rishawi said. “It is one of few opportunities you have that young where you are treated like an adult and are expected to act mature.”

Additionally, Wills said that YLL assisted her in growing tolerance and cooperation when working with others.

“My biggest challenge in YLL was probably learning that people have different opinions than me and that’s okay,” Wills said. “It helped me realize that you can still work successfully with people who don’t always agree with you.”

Sughrue especially loves the youth portion of this organization because of all the things teenagers have to offer.

“I just love building relationships with all people, but especially with this age group,” Sughrue said. “You all have so much potential, and I just want to help foster that.”

Don’t have the time or missed the registration deadline for YLL 25 but still want to be involved in your community? Try joining one of Leadership Lincoln’s curriculum committees, or just reach out directly to Sughrue, Uridil or Evans to ask about ways that you can stay connected. You can still make a difference no matter your situation.



YLL 24 participates in a team building activity during their first seminar

THIS *or* THAT

HIGH SCHOOL/FINALS EDITION

TESTS

EARLY BIRD

TYPED NOTES

KAHOOT

SPEECH

SPOTIFY

CHROMEBOOKS

CRAMMING

PROJECTS

NIGHT OWL

WRITTEN NOTES

QUIZLET

ESSAY

APPLE MUSIC

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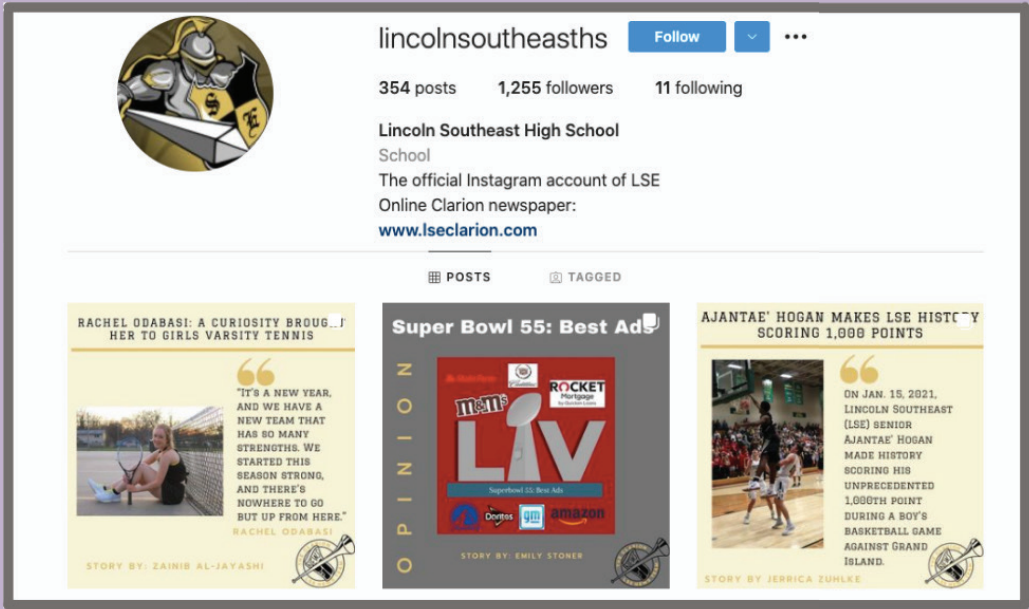
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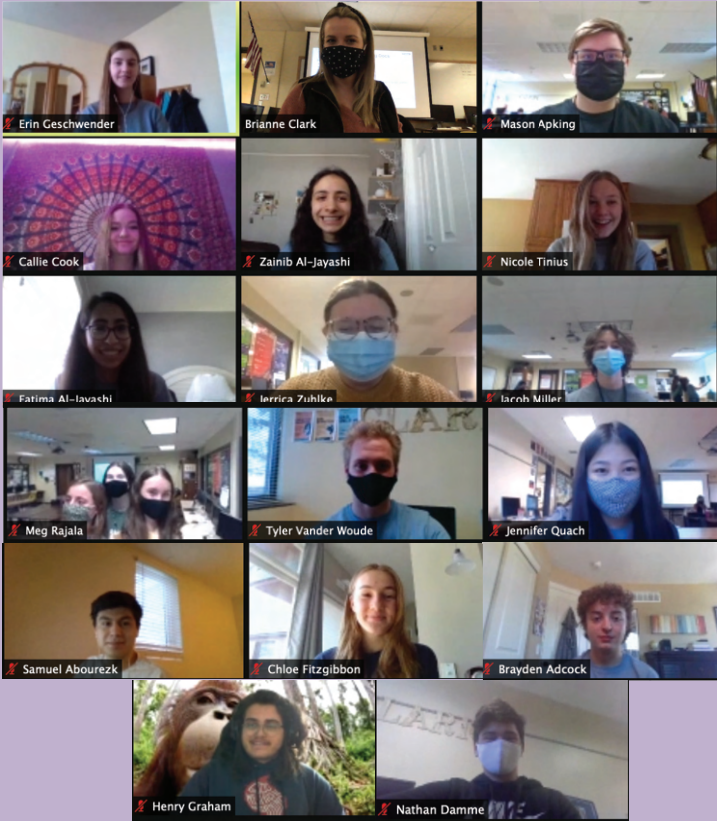
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what we do.

The Clarion is the official newspaper of Lincoln Southeast High School. We publish a print magazine three times a year, and online daily. The Clarion serves as an open forum for students and staff to discuss issues concerning Southeast. The staff also gives brief news updates daily on LSE's official Instagram account, @lincolnsoutheasths. Letters to the editor are welcome. The Clarion reserves the right to edit letters for length, clarity, and accuracy, but will not attempt to alter meaning. Editorials represent the opinion of the Clarion staff. The Clarion does not represent the opinions of the administration, school, or Lincoln Public Schools; its purpose is to establish facts and promote free thought and open discussion. Any suggestions are welcome and encouraged.

Please submit your letters and suggestions to Mrs. Clark's office in room D113
or send an email to bclark4@lps.org

Have a knack for writing and a passion for truth? See your counselor to register for Newspaper. The Clarion meets daily and on needed afternoons and evenings after school.

We want to hear from YOU.

the Clarion

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