

# The Loomis Chaffee Log

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## OPINION

# Empirical Evidence Shows Grade Inflation at LC

By LILY POTTER '21 and RYAN FORTANI '22

Opinions Editor and News Editor

Despite grade inflation being a trend both nationwide and among Loomis Chaffee's peer schools, Loomis should seek to curb grade inflation because the increasing prevalence of high letter grades leads to little differentiation between students and a lack of incentive that rigorous grading provides.

Grade inflation has been on the rise nationally over the past several years, and Loomis is no exception. A study by Michael Hurwitz and Jason Lee which was published by Johns Hopkins University Press found that between 1998 and 2016, the average high school GPA went from 3.27 to 3.38.

Loomis Chaffee's degradation of grading standards can be assumed by analyzing both our honor rolls and school profiles that are sent to colleges. The Loomis Chaffee Honor Roll, published at the end of each term, is broken down into two sections—high honor roll students (with unweighted term GPAs

of 3.75+) and honor roll students (with unweighted term GPAs of 3.50-3.74). In the Loomis grading scale, an A+ is a 4.3, an A is a 4.0, an A- is a 3.7, a B+ is a 3.3, etc.

Grading standards as recently as less than a decade ago were fairly consistent, with the median GPA staying at slightly below a 3.5. In the winter of 2013, 44% of students earned a GPA of 3.5 or above. Slightly less than three years later, in fall 2015, 48% of students earned a GPA of 3.5 or above, indicating fairly consistent distribution of grades during the time in between.

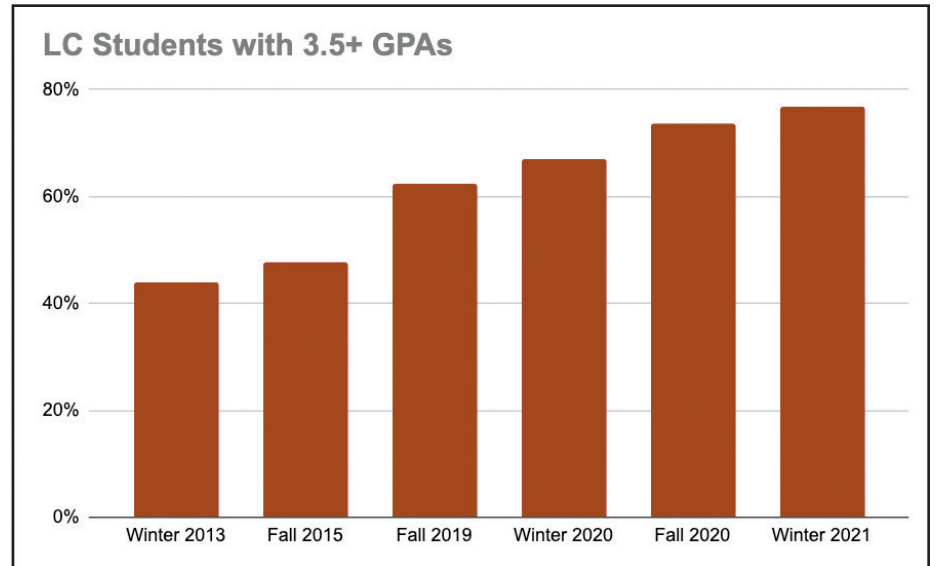
However, the percentages of students with a GPA of 3.5 or above in the past two years are as follows: 62.50% in fall 2019, 67% in winter 2020, 73.60% in fall 2020, and 76.70% in winter 2021. While the last two data points may be outliers in an abnormal year due to COVID, the data from the 2019-20 school year indicates a trend of grade inflation.

According to Loomis Chaffee school profiles, the percentage of students from the classes from 2016 to 2019 with a 3.7+

cumulative junior year GPA are as follows: 20.90% in the Class of 2016, 28.20% in the Class of 2017, 30% in the Class of 2018, and

30.50% in the Class of 2019, indicating a 46% increase in three years.

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Graph by Lily Potter '21

# Students Receive COVID-19 Vaccinations on Campus

By EDWARD PARK '23

Staff Writer

With the state of Connecticut moving up vaccine eligibility on April 1 to all residents ages 16 and older, many Loomis Chaffee students have had the long-awaited opportunity to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

Loomis arranged an on-campus COVID-19 vaccination clinic to accommodate for students who express interest in receiving a vaccine. The clinic administered the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine to students on April 21 and will administer the second dose on May 12. The health center has partnered up with Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC), a primary care service provider in Connecticut, to ensure that the clinics run smoothly.

"The school leadership is excited to offer this clinic for students as part of our effort to ensure the health and safety of students during the pandemic," COVID-19 coordinator Ms. Liscinsky said. "We have had many questions from students and parents about how they can get the vaccine and this will make it easy for them to do so."

For the students who were initially scrambling to secure a vaccine appointment in early April and were unsuccessful, the school's email announcement of an on-campus clinic was welcome news.

"I didn't know whether or not I would be able to get vaccinated before flying back to Hong Kong," Justin Wu '22 said. "Knowing that Loomis is providing us with the option

Photo by Edward Park '23

A student's COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card which was given after receiving the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

to receive vaccination at school is relieving for me."

Other students who secured a vaccine appointment off-campus and already received their first dose plan to leave campus once more to receive their second dose of the vaccine.

"While I would prefer getting my vaccination on-campus for the sake of convenience, it is too late," Alex Ahn '23 said. "I already received one dose of the vaccine at a local pharmacy and have to go there once more to get my second [dose]."

Although the majority of Loomis stu-

dents qualify for the vaccine, a small portion of the student body is under 16 and therefore does not qualify for the vaccine. These younger students must wait until the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) expands vaccine eligibility to younger portions of the population.

"While I don't qualify yet for the vaccine, I am hopeful that I will receive the vaccine in the near future," Leo Lee '24 said.

While the school's effort to provide a vaccine clinic was generally met with enthusiasm by students, there have also been signs of anxiety and uneasiness concerning the vaccine.

"Receiving the vaccine at school is definitely relieving. However, I'm anxious about its side effects," Justin Wu '22 said. "I've been told that vaccines could cause momentary pain and possible fevers, so I'm hoping that nothing of that magnitude happens to me."

At other Connecticut boarding schools, various plans have been made in efforts to vaccinate students. Similar to Loomis, Hotchkiss plans to partner up with Community Health Center, Inc. to open a vaccine clinic on-campus. Taft and Choate, on the other hand, plan to provide transportation to students to nearby off-campus vaccination clinics.

As a result, most of the state's prep schools plan to have eligible students receive their first dose in late April and their second dose in mid-May.

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# Newly Admitted Pelicans Visit Campus Via Car

By EMILY KHYM '23 and DORA LIN '23  
Staff Writer and Contributor

After a year of virtual programming for prospective students, the Loomis Chaffee Admissions Office was finally able to welcome newly admitted students to the Island—albeit in a different method than usual. Due to the pandemic, Loomis Chaffee's campus has been closed to outside visitors for the entirety of the admissions season and therefore prospective students were not able to interview or tour the campus in-person.

In order to be cognizant of current coronavirus precautions, the Admissions Office hosted a Pelican Spring Drive-Through on Saturday, April 3, for about 75 families. This event was hosted in lieu of the traditional Pelican Preview days which are held in April of each year. In a typical year, newly admitted students are paired with a current Loomis student and shadow classes on campus. While the drive-through didn't allow the newly admitted class to fully experience Loomis, it did offer them a first glimpse at what the Island is like in person.

During the event, tour guides and students spread around campus to cheer for families driving through the school. At each major stop on the tour, current students informed the families about surrounding campus buildings and possible courses/events that would take place there. Consequently, newly admitted pelicans learned more about campus in-person and felt the community atmosphere while keeping a distance.

Families were also able to see the varying sports offered at Loomis in action, learn

about numerous educational programs, get a view of the school's ongoing physical developments, and get Loomis merchandise as they toured the campus. Many prospective students expressed gratitude for being able to ask questions and meet with current students in-person.

As always, masks and hand sanitizer were used to ensure safety for all.

"Safety was our top concern – for our community and visiting families. I met with Mary Liscinsky to make sure we were doing everything necessary to make it safe for all. All protocols that we are all familiar with (masks, distancing, hand sanitizer) were in full force," Associate Director of Admission Mrs. Ali Murphy said.

Given that all tours this year have been held online, this drive-through gave many tour guides their first experience with in-person tours.

"I think this drive-through was a new attempt and the best option we had. Students and faculty all tried to make the school more hospitable and—as tour guides—we all served in our selected positions to explain and literally give them a 'tour' about specific sections of the school," Andy Choi '23 said.

"Many families thought that this experience was beneficial. Overall, I believe that this event was a standout experience for the newly admitted students" Head Tour Guide Cory Plummer '22 said.

The Loomis community and prospective families all enjoyed the drive-through.

"It was a good way for new students to come on campus and see what school is like" Christa Finlay '23 said.



Photo by Dora Lin '23

The LC Admissions Office.

## LC Climate Groups Host Events for Earth Month

By CALVIN PAN '23  
Contributor

Springtime on the Loomis Chaffee campus has always been accompanied by Earth Week, a week-long, event-filled celebration of Earth Day. But that may be changing for good.

This year, the Alvord Center for Global and Environmental Studies—in an effort with many other groups like the E-Proctors, Project Green, and even the Pancake Society—organized an entire month of events oriented around environmentalism, replacing LC's Earth Week with an Earth Month.

Some of the events planned on campus for Earth Month are educational in nature. These events include the Mountain Film Festival, where students will get the chance to view environment-themed documentaries created by independent filmmakers, and a debate about the Green New Deal hosted by Simone Moales '21.

"We kicked off the month with a Youth Forum with US Senator Richard Blumenthal, which was really, really inspiring," Science Faculty Member and Head of the E-Proctors Mr. Jeffrey Dyreson, one of the main coordinators of this year's Earth Month, said.

Other events, such as Pancake Society's breakfast featuring maple syrup produced by Alejandro Rincon '21, are much more relaxation-focused.

"For Earth Month, we hosted a therapeutic 'bookmark decorating' event to relieve the stress from finals week in an environmentally-friendly way," a leader of Project Green, a student group promoting sustainability efforts on campus, Ella Xue '23 said.

The 4-week-long celebration of sustainability at Loomis is primarily coordinated by Director of Sustainable Agriculture Ms. Gratia Lee and Science Faculty Member Mr. Dyreson, both of whom are excited about the initiative due to its potential to promote change within the Loomis community.

"I hope it shows everyone, students and faculty alike, that there are concrete ways that we can all make a difference everyday," Ms. Lee said.

The recent transition from Earth Week to Earth Month was designed to ensure that

the events were able to best fulfill their mission of engaging the Loomis community to help make a change.

"One of the mantras of Earth Day is that every day is Earth Day, and so we've kind of embraced the spirit of that and expanded it throughout the whole month," Mr. Dyreson said.

"Because of COVID, we are trying to have more events for students right here on campus, and we couldn't fit all of those events within Earth Week," Ms. Lee said.

However, this shift may not be a permanent one.

"We'll see how this month goes, and then we'll take some time in May to reflect with the different groups that organized it and the community as a whole... and if there's a demand—if there's a will—we'll do it [in the future]," Mr. Dyreson said.

Regardless of whether Earth Month remains in the future, some organizations are already looking forward to next year's events. Reconsidering some ideas that they were unable to fully execute this year due to the constraints of the pandemic and generating fresh ideas to supplement those, groups on campus remain environmentally motivated.

"In future years, a fun event we could do is [to] have students write down climate pledges on blue and green sticky notes, and arrange them into the shape of the Earth." Ella said.

Despite this month's successes, there are some areas of improvement that Loomis community members want to see for future Earth Months, especially in terms of student engagement.

"We would always love more participation, from students and organizations alike," Ms. Lee said.

Overall, though, this Earth Month provided students and faculty alike with the ability to engage with environmentalism in both educational and relaxing events, which ultimately made the program a remarkable success.

"Loomis Chaffee is a place where students can learn, grow, and take action to make a difference, and we definitely believe that this Earth Month has provided them with the ability to do so" Mr. Dyreson said.

## The LC Common Application Heads into Second Year

By MICHELLE LIU '23  
Contributor

This year marks the second year that Loomis Chaffee has used the Community Work Program (CWP) Leadership Common Application. The CWP Leadership Common Application allows rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors to apply for leadership positions in the coming year.

The positions available on the application include Residential Assistant/Prefect, Environmental Proctor, Learning Access & Student Achievement (LA&SA) staff member, Loomis Chaffee Athletics Association (LCAA) Leader, Student Community Committee member, Quantitative Resource Center (QRC) staff member, Writing Studio staff member, Peer Mentor, and Peer Health Educator.

The new CWP Common Application has changed the application process for both students and faculty alike.

With this new Common App, students can apply for their first choice positions, while also being considered for secondary leadership positions. They are also able to be considered for multiple positions if they want to hold more than one leadership position at the school.

"The number of applicants increased this year, in large part because of the addition of three positions (Prefect/RA, Peer Mentor, Peer Health Educator). This year we are working together to fill leadership roles as equitably as possible while also allowing students to pursue more than one leadership role as they see fit," Mr. Eric LaForest, history faculty member and director of the Norton Family Center for the Common Good, said.

"Both last spring and this spring, the CWP Leadership Common App has made it easier for students to apply for multiple leadership positions on campus," Mr. LaForest said.

Additionally, the CWP increases the efficiency of the application process and helps distribute leadership positions across a wide variety of students within the community.

"A streamlined application saves significant time, as students in years past would need to navigate multiple processes. Also, by asking students to rank their first choice, the common app requires students to signal interest; that signaling helps faculty members make more informed decisions about the available leadership positions, which improves programs for faculty and students alike," Mr. LaForest said.

The Common App also holds benefits for Loomis faculty.

Dean of Sophomores Mr. Mike Donegan said that "it also makes for an easier process for faculty who make decisions on things, such as dorm leadership, to access information about students from those that know best."

In addition, Mr. Donegan also explained how the Common App resolved some previous worries in the application process. "We've always tried to have prefect applications early so then if one doesn't get it, [one can try applying for another position]. All that can fall into place, but it's hard to balance this because everybody's working [on creating work jobs at the same time]."

"Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this Common App process is the first step in an effort to think more holistically and deliberately about how we do student leadership at Loomis Chaffee. I am excited about where else we might go next and how that might enrich the student experience," Mr. LaForest said.

Despite the overall changes to the CWP this year the application process has only changed in the timelines and position offerings. Students can expect a smooth process where they make their choices clear with no added setbacks.

"The RA/Prefect interview has always been significant, so that hasn't changed one way or another. The common app has changed the RA/Prefect application only in terms of syncing up deadlines and materials. The number of applicants for those dorm leadership positions has held steady compared to past years," Mr. LaForest said.



Photo by Ella Xue '23

As part of an Earth Month event, Biani Ebie '21 and other leaders of student sustainability initiative Project Green instruct their fellow students on decorating bookmarks made from reusable paper.



# The Log Investigates: Haircuts for Boarders

By RYAN FORTANI '22  
News Editor

When it was determined that boarding students at Loomis Chaffee would be required to remain on campus for the 15 week stretch from Winter Term 2 through Spring Term 2, numerous questions arose. In particular, however, one seemingly trivial but ultimately complicated dilemma engulfed the minds of many members of the student body: haircuts.

Originally, the school determined that haircuts—in any capacity—would not be safe during the pandemic and, therefore, the school did not provide students with the option to receive services from barbers or stylists.

However, toward the end of Winter Term 2, school officials sent an email to a list of black identifying students and offered them the opportunity to receive haircuts from a black barber that was being brought to campus and set up with tools in the dance studio found in Olcott Center.

“The idea originated from the DEI Office because we were trying to think of different ways that we could bring students some joy on campus, and specifically with the month of February being black history month, we came up with the idea of bringing a black barber on campus since most of our black students have their hair cut by a black barber or a black woman stylist,” Dean of Students and Associate Dean of DEI Mr. Elliot Dial said.

The program was a major success. In fact, the program is now preparing for its second iteration. This time, however, the haircuts have been publicized in the Daily Bulletin and will include a black female stylist rather than a barber that is only open to black male students.

“For black hair for girls there are a lot of things you need to have, so we originally couldn't bring a stylist that would meet the needs of black girls on campus. Therefore, we tried to do some form of gender equity with that and brought in nail technicians the first time that came to do girls and guys nails on campus,” Dean Dial said.

While many black students appreciated the effort the school put into providing them with haircuts, others raised concerns regarding the Loomis' decision to only provide this service to a predetermined group of students based on their race.

“We've been here for eight weeks, so I think a lot of students were really in need of a haircut. I think that was an opportunity that should've been presented to the whole student body,” Jake Klein '23 said.

“At first it was a little concerning because they hadn't mentioned anything about haircuts to any non-black students but they then offered all students an opportunity to get haircuts later on so I think the problem was solved eventually,” Wyatt Keller '23 added.

According to the Dean's Office, the barber that came to campus for only black students was a means of testing whether haircuts could be feasible for the entire student population—it was not meant to feel exclusive.

“The main idea was that we wanted it to be a smaller subsection to see how it ran and to make sure we did it in the safest way possible and make sure that it was still successful,” Dean Dial said.

While the idea of a conservative rollout of the haircut program made sense considering Loomis' concern for COVID, questions regarding the decision to only have black students receive haircuts during the first iteration of the barber still remain.

“There is a difference between how it ran and how you spin it. You can see it as ‘the school doesn't care about all the population’—if you want to spin it that way. Instead, you can look at it as ‘the school wanted to do something very good for the whole population and we weren't sure how it was going to run so we test drove it and then the rest of the school finally said okay, we can make this work,’” Dean Dial said.

Now that the DEI Office's initiative has proven to the school that haircuts can be carried out in a manner that is safe in the midst of the pandemic, Loomis has begun preparations to bring a stylist on campus for all members of the community. The stylist who will be offered by the school is a white male who was recommended by a day stu-



Photo by Michael Zhou '22

**Benson Wang '23 right after receiving a haircut from Michael Zhou '22.**

dent parent.

“We have set him up in an area where students can be safe and socially distanced but get a trim or maintenance cut since in the past they would be able to go off campus and get at their convenience,” Ms. Hannah Moger, administrative assistant to the deans' office, said.

If the program works well for both the students and the stylists, there is a possibility that the program could continue post-COVID. However, that does rely on an acceptance of this new offering rather than creating additional controversies around it. In particular, when the Office of the Deans announced that a stylist would be coming to campus, many students took this as an affront to the work Michael Zhou '22 has done in the community.

Before COVID-19, Michael, operating under the alias MZ Cuts, carried out haircuts for students on campus in exchange for cash. However, the Deans shut this program down when they found out that a student business was being operated on campus.

“It creates a power dynamic that's un-

healthy. So if a student is selling something to another student and that is their friend, perhaps it creates an environment where ‘I feel pressure to buy that thing because it's my friend who is the one selling it,’ and we just want to avoid those types of situations,” Ms. Moger said.

However, when haircuts became a prized commodity during our 15 weeks on campus, the Deans Office revisited the idea of allowing Michael to cut hair—provided that he did it for free.

“I've worked with Michael to allow him to give haircuts and he recently gave out his first set of cuts, which was very exciting to have happen,” Dean Dial said. “Michael brought this up in Winter Term 2, maybe even Fall Term 2, but at the time we wanted to make sure we got through the term as safely as possible and that meant no haircuts within the 6 feet rule. The barber we brought the first time had his vaccine, he was masked, it was in a room one-on-one and was very different from having a student barber who is not vaccinated cutting hair on boarders who go back into the dorms.”

However, the announcement of the stylist coming to campus to serve the whole community led several students to begin posting on social media in hopes of showing solidarity for Michael who, at the time, had not been given approval to provide haircuts.

Once again, questions surrounding Loomis' haircut program arose, but the Deans emphasized the reasoning behind offering numerous options for students to receive haircuts.

“Michael can't cut everyone's hair and so we are offering kids different opportunities. Michael was saying how he wasn't going to charge kids and that's great so he is one of the options for students who cannot afford to pay for a salon stylist who, in my opinion, charges a lot of money for a haircut,” Dean Dial said.

Despite some confusions along the way, Loomis has finally found multiple ways of providing haircuts for students on campus in the midst of a pandemic.

## LC Allows Family Visits

By SAMANTHA TISHLER '23  
Staff Writer

Due to this year's COVID-19 protocols, most Loomis Chaffee boarding students had no opportunities to see their parents since move-in at the end of January. While student safety is the number one priority with COVID-19, the school is always looking for ways to ease students' stress levels.

“The end of January through May is a very long time to be away from people you love,” COVID-19 Coordinator Mary Liscinsky said.

As a result, the campus announced its decision to hold family visitation periods for its boarding students. The school evaluated several factors such as the weather, the ability to put tents up if needed, and the regional scene getting better in terms of COVID-19.

When students heard about family visitations, they were eager for a reunion.

“I was excited because I would be able to see my family and my dog, and it would be pretty fun because I haven't seen them in a long time,” Dhruv Mahajan '23 said.

The school understands that there are al-

ways risks with COVID-19, so they have put a few different rules in place to mitigate the risk. Parents visiting were required to get a negative PCR test before their arrival, stay outside and away from student living spaces, and wear masks.

“We ask them as much as they can—although it is hard when you see your kid after a few months or your parents or your dog—to stay socially distanced,” Dean Liscinsky said.

Families were assigned one-hour time slots, but the school was flexible. The staggered visits were more to ensure that families will have space under the tents if it rains. The school simply asked that families kept their visits reasonable and enjoyed their time.

“I thought they were going to be more strict about it, but they kind of let you do your own thing, so it was good. I hope they do it again,” Grace Puskar '23 said.

The visitations are currently open to all families (and furry friends) as long as they abide by the rules and restrictions. While some families traveled under an hour for the visitations, others traveled several hours.

“We have people coming from all differ-



Photo by Samantha Tishler '23

**Madison Moenkhaus '24 and her mom posing for a photo during their family visitation.**

ent places in the US at this point, and we welcome anyone who wanted to come from anywhere across the globe if they could get here,” Dean Liscinsky said.

Overall, these visitations had a positive impact on the community. Students were able to see their loved ones, family members and pets, for the first time in over two months.

“The benefits are just being able to see the people you love after a very long time, and I have to laugh because as much as people were excited to see their parents and siblings, they were really excited to see their animals,” Dean Liscinsky said.

On May 20, the last day of classes, the COVID-19 Prom will commence with the Class of 2021 students in attendance.

“There is a lot of positive energy around this event, and we think it will be awesome,” Dean of Student Life Jessica Matzkin said.

The seniors began working on this project at the end of the winter term and have found a venue right here on the Island. The prom will take place under a tent in Grubbs Quad. The food menu, decorations, and music was all chosen by members of the senior class.

Most of the prom planning will be in the hands of the Class of 2021, with the only large difference from years past being the COVID-19 restrictions.

“The only real difference is that it will be

## Plans for Prom Push On

By SAMMY ROSS '23  
Contributor

on campus and just seniors (no guests) can attend,” Dean Matzkin said.

There will still be proper social distancing and mask regulations, but there will be dancing and music as well. The planning committee also included numerous fun party activities such as a dance floor, photo booth, and more.

“The atmosphere will be festive and beautiful,” Dean Matzkin said.

The Prom Committee is also working on allowing seniors to take memorable, indi-

vidual pictures without their masks on.

Unlike a typical year, the prom for the Class of 2021 will not include a sit-down dinner, but rather, heavy bistro hors d'oeuvres, lined up on the sides of Grubb's quad, will be served.

“While nontraditional, this plan allows for more space for photo booths, dancing, and socializing within feasible distance,” Simone Moales '21, one of the seniors in charge of organizing the event, said.

“I am most excited to dress up with my

friends and take photos with members of the class for our final hurrah before graduation. Because of COVID-19, there have been no formal events for students to get ready for, so this will be extremely exciting to see how everyone will come together for this night of elegance,” Simone said.

The Log would like to congratulate the seniors, the Prom Committee, Dean Matzkin, COVID-19 Coordinator Dean Mary Liscinsky, Director of Alumni & Parent Relations Mrs. Lisa Ross, and everyone else who helped make this event possible. Although prom will be on campus, these COVID-safe changes will make it special and different from years in the past. Ultimately, the actions of the Prom Committee bring Loomis Chaffee one step closer to normalcy.



# How Are Remote Teachers Doing?

By HAZEL LE '22 and JUSTIN WU '22  
Features Editor and Contributor

## Jen Legendre

Ms. Legendre joined the science faculty this year, teaching physics online, without having ever set foot on campus. While teaching, learning, and doing almost anything virtually for a long period of time can pose a challenge for many people, Ms. Legendre is actually grateful to have been able to teach online this year and spend time with her family.

"I really love that my family is together—that's huge. My daughters have been doing school on the computer downstairs and I have my classrooms here upstairs," Ms. Legendre said.

On the other hand, Ms. Legendre found it hard to communicate her enthusiasm for Physics online, especially when excitement lies at the heart of what she usually offers to the classroom. As a result, she has altered her usually teaching methods to be more compatible with the online platform.

"In the past year, my common approach to physics has been discovering the equations first using data and then applying the equations in practice. This year we've done less discovering equations and just application," Ms. Legendre said.

One thing that surprised her was that she got to know her students more than she thought.

"I thought there'd be even more of a disconnection but somehow I truly feel that these are my students. I really know them and their personalities," Ms. Legendre said.

## Kathleen Wiggenhauser

Along with the other college counselors, Mrs. Wiggenhauser, an associate director of college guidance, has not been able to have any in-person meetings with her juniors this year.

"I'm worried that when I actually see them in-person, they might not know who I am," Mrs. Wiggenhauser said.

Although she missed her students, the community, and being a part of something bigger, Mrs. Wiggenhauser expressed that her work has been particularly compatible with the online format. The one-on-one meetings have been efficient and convenient.

"I would obviously rather be in-person meeting, but doing meetings over the computer has given us a lot more opportunities to do stuff together that we wouldn't really do in my office," Mrs. Wiggenhauser said.

In contrast to one-on-one meetings, the cohort meetings are more difficult to navigate. Students usually find themselves hesitant to ask questions and to engage in a bigger group. Another aspect that distinguishes this year from other school years was the convenient schedule to set meetings with parents.

"It's actually been easier for parents to request meetings with me over Zoom, especially international parents who are not

always likely to come to campus. Sometimes parents are around during the big group meetings as well," Mrs. Wiggenhauser said.

## Jed Stuart

Unlike Mrs. Wiggenhauser, Mr. Stuart, also an associate director of college guidance, felt that fulfilling counseling duties through Zoom has been especially trying.

"I enjoy being able to see students in person and being able to connect with them," Mr. Stuart said. "I think part of it is figuring out how to balance time, and juggling taking care of kids with doing my duties as a consultant. It's a challenge that has, at times, been difficult."

Walking a thin line between consulting and familial responsibilities, Mr. Stuart cites that the online environment has also posed new challenges when interacting with students.

"I wonder if it's harder to read people in a virtual setting. I wonder if our work is actually counselling, as a lot of people don't realize that what we do is also reading the student and supporting them, making sure that they're listening and being mindful. There's less time now for just talking about what's going on and getting to know the student more on an individual level," Mr. Stuart said.

## Eric LaForest

While Mr. LaForest, director of Norton Family Center for the Common Good and a history faculty member, appreciates the opportunity to teach history, he misses the opportunity to forge closer connections with students.

"Little conversations are not so little. I really think those are what makes what happens in class time more valuable," Mr. LaForest said. "I've been able to teach students who are all around the world and all around the nation; the geographic diversity has really enriched our conversations. There's a magic of us coming together all at one time and sharing ideas."

Mr. LaForest also sensed the emotional toll that online school took on his students, and tailored his teaching approach to enhance their learning experience.

"I think I've had to be more deliberate about conveying a sense of warmth, and sustaining a sense of culture that I think a class like CLUSH (CL US History) requires. I've had to put in a lot more energy to the non-historical experience to the class, whether it's the use of humor, or talking about a cool idea, just how to set the tone in class," Mr. LaForest said.

Seeking to maintain engagement and curiosity amongst his students, Mr. LaForest also continues to impose a sense of intellectual challenge, while providing academic support.

"I try to make our classes intellectually stimulating and college level, but along with that, attempt to mitigate some more academically stressful elements of the class," Mr. LaForest said.

# Students Win Scholastic Art & Writing Awards

By MARIAPAUOLA GONZALEZ '22  
Staff Writer

On March 17, the winners of the National Scholastic Art and Writing Awards were announced. Rosalie Lyons '21 was awarded a Gold Medal in Science Fiction & Fantasy writing for her piece titled "Nine Lives." Emily Tang '24 won a Silver Medal in Photography for her work, "Rite of Passage."

The Scholastics Art & Writing Awards is the nation's longest-running, most prestigious recognition program for creative teens. The program consists of two rounds: regional and national. A student may enter for the regional award first, with a probability of winning a Gold Key, Silver Key, or an Honorable Mention. In winning a Gold Key, a piece will automatically be submitted to the national level, granting an artist or writer the chance to win a Gold or Silver medal.

Emily's piece, titled "The Rite of Passage," was taken during travels last summer in Guizhou, China.

"I remember walking past this village and seeing a father cutting his son's hair. I was stunned by the love and trust in their relationship, and a sense of serenity it conveys. I had hoped to capture that moment and bring forth the same emotion I felt to other people," Emily said.

As a freshman, Emily plans on continuing her Loomis career in photography by taking Advanced Photography II and III in the future, having already completed Photography I this year.

"Currently, I don't know what I am going to pursue in the future, but photography will definitely be something I will do for a lifetime, whether as a profession or a hob-

by," Emily concluded.

Rosalie's written piece was inspired by a project she was working on in the archives department, a time capsule which commemorates the 50th anniversary of the department. The time capsule which will be opened in 2070, is designed to immortalize the current day — Loomis in the 2020s and our current culture.

"[My piece] was a kind of humanization of the idea of a time capsule — how a supposed future would see the current day and vice versa," Rosalie said. "It was also a futurized take on the age-old idea of a prophet. In a lot of spiritual traditions, prophets are often pinnacles of faith and morality. This piece was set up to flip that idea. Here, the apparent prophet is unwilling, guarded and disbeliever of the supernatural herself."

Rosalie states that her fellow English classmates played a role in the "feedback" process during the multiple workshop discussions that she participated in.

"I've been super tentative to share my work during my time at Loomis so it was a really liberating experience to receive feedback from others that I feel thankful for," Rosalie said.

Rosalie plans on majoring in screenwriting in college. She hopes to continue writing pieces which focus on a futuristic world, whilst also writing pieces of other genres.

"I think we live in a really unique time in connection to the consolidation of relationships between humanity with technology and industry. Because of this, I think exploring these topics in media has the potential to be quite powerful."



The Rite of Passage, Emily Tang '24's Silver Medal photography piece.

Photo by Emily Tang '24

# ISIS Survivor Ameen Mokdad Talks to LC Orchestra

By MAEVE DOWD '23  
Contributor

For Iraqi composer Ameen Mokdad, music is not only a universal language, but a beacon of hope in times of desperation. The Loomis Chaffee Orchestra, recently collaborated with Mr. Mokdad and learned about his difficult, but inspiring experience in Iraq.

In 2014, Mr. Mokdad was living in Mosul, an Iraqi city of 1.6 million, working as a musician and artist when the city was overtaken and occupied by the terrorist group

ISIS.

"We could see the Isil fighters in their trademark pickup trucks with their black flags roaming around the streets," Mr. Mokdad said in an interview with BBC Outlook. With Mosul occupied by ISIS, playing music was forbidden and even punishable by death. But Mr. Mokdad defied ISIS and kept practicing cello in secret, and even posted videos of his music on Facebook. "There was no way I was going to let go of my music," Mr. Mokdad said in the BBC interview. Eventually, Mr. Mokdad was caught by

ISIS and his beloved instruments were stolen. Fearing for his life, Mr. Mokdad escaped to his cousin's house and remained in hiding for two years. Even in hiding, he continued to play music by making small improvised instruments out of old guitar strings. Eventually ISIS was defeated in 2017 and the city was liberated; Mosul began to recover.

The Loomis Orchestra was first exposed to Mr. Mokdad in February of 2020, when the Chamber Music group "Cuatro Puntos" performed Mr. Mokdad's music during their performance at Loomis Chaffee. Mr. Netta Hadari, Music Faculty and Orchestra Director, was impressed by the performance describing it as "simple but powerful."

More recently, the Loomis Orchestra learned a piece Mr. Mokdad composed, Fear. Seeking to deepen his student's connection with the composer, Mr. Hadari arranged a Zoom call with orchestra students and Mr. Mokdad.

"The goal of the project was to have a cultural exchange... but also to feel that feeling of fear through the music. I thought that was important, especially for this year," Mr. Hadari said.

Following an introduction about his life,

students asked Mokdad questions about his life, experience in hiding and his music.

"It was enlightening to hear Ameen's life experiences and the meaning behind the piece; I think it brought an extra layer to our playing." Will Howley '23, a bassist in the rchestra, said.

Mr. Mokdad told Loomis students that "through music and art we grow our humanity." Even when living through the darkest of times, Ameen was still able to find hope through music.

Mr. Hadari plans to organize more collaborations like the one with Mr. Mokdad. For example, earlier this year the Loomis Orchestra met over Zoom with Carlos Simon, a well-known composer and musician, and winner of the 2021 Sphinx Medal of Excellence, which recognizes extraordinary classical Black and Latinx musicians collaborations.

Mr. Hadari hopes to continue collaborations like this and create more opportunities for orchestra students to interact with the composers of the music they play.

"I think it's an important project and I am looking forward to the next one," Mr. Hadari said.



# GESC Capstone Reflection

For our GESC (Gilchrist Environmental Studies Certificate) Capstone Project, we participated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Pilot Program. The SDGs are a set of 17 universal goals created by the UN to be achieved by 2030. These

include goals such as no poverty, climate action, gender equality, and much more. They provide a blueprint for a more sustainable future for all countries. This year, the education around SDGs have been integrated into the GESC program and seminars to

help students develop deeper insights into issues around the world. Once a week over the course of four weeks, we met with the representatives of Worldstrides Campsites in Ecuador, Cambodia, Kenya, and Peru to learn about what environmental issues were

impacting their country the most and what solutions the campsites were implementing to help local communities. Below is a collection of reflections on issues and SDGs we learned about for each of the countries.

## PERU

By **STEPHANIE ZHANG '21**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

The SDGs that the Peru campsite focused on were SDG #1, No Poverty, SDG #3, Good Health and Wellbeing, and SDG #6, clean water and sanitation. Throughout my research for Peru, the one thing that stood out to me most was how geographically diverse Peru is and how that diversity resulted in very area specific issues that made it hard for the same policies or infrastructure to be implemented country wide. Peru can be categorized by three main types of geographical regions: the coastal deserts, the mountains, and the tropical rainforests. While the rainforest regions in Peru could be facing excessive rain and flooding, the desert and mountainous regions could simultaneously be suffering from water scarcity and drought. Due to the lack of plumbing facilities and water filtration facilities, open defecation

and poor sanitation are also huge problems in Peru. The Worldstrides campsites in Peru are attempting to improve living situations and sanitation by building flushable village toilets with waste storage tanks to prevent the contamination of other water resources. Additionally, school greenhouses and guinea pig cribs (a popular source of protein in Peru) have been created to help improve poverty and food scarcity while also exposing the children to more education surrounding better sanitation practices and agriculture. Another issue that was really specific to Peru was the intense sun exposure and high UV radiation levels in Peru due to the altitude that Peru is at, especially in the mountainous regions. Climate change world wide and the increased amounts of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has caused this to worsen. Overall, the issues mentioned here only brush the surface about how climate change impacts Peru as a whole and while a variety of projects are being implemented, climate change is a global issue that we need to fight together as the world.

## ECUADOR

By **LILY BAHREHMANN '21**  
*Contributor*

Going into the first of our four discussions, I was unsure what to expect as I planned our group's preparation the week before. The discussion we had with the Ecuador campsite mainly focused on SDG 13, climate action. The campsite's projects, however, were also focused on SDGs 15 and 4, life on land, and quality education. Even before the discussion, our group researched the importance of the Amazon Rainforest for local people and the world collectively. With climate change, deforestation, poverty-related cash crop dependence, and other issues jeopardizing the Amazon, Ecuadorian people suffer greatly as the Amazon diminishes. Climate change also severely impacts weather conditions, like the worsening of the yearly El Nino flooding

that affects thousands of farmers and people in Ecuador. Although Ecuador was the first country to recognize nature protection by law, Ecuadorian people currently struggle to see substantial government support. Ecuadorians continue to replant trees and educate people about environmental issues and reforestation while also expanding the tourism industry, all work seen specifically at this campsite. In our discussion, the Ecuadorian people we spoke to became notably emotional as we talked about the worsening situation of the Amazon as a cause of climate change. The people from the campsite even asked our opinions on the modernization of rural areas, which was surprising. Overall, many people in Ecuador work extremely hard to improve the dire situation they have found themselves facing and have taken matters into their own hands. But with little contribution from the government or ways to implement large-scale solutions, the efforts will continuously struggle to succeed on a long-term basis.

## KENYA

By **BIANI EBIE '21**  
*Contributor*

I was really excited to learn about the campsites in Kenya. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that the Kenyan campsite focused on were SDGs 2 and 15. When talking with the campsite, I learnt a lot about the role in which tourism plays in the Kenyan economy, and how, because of COVID-19, safaris had to focus a lot more on improving its local tourism by doing things like lowering ticket prices to encourage more people to visit the parks. Another topic we discussed was food security in Kenya. Like many other tropical countries, Kenya is experiencing more droughts and a lot less rainfall due to climate change. Prolonged droughts and intense flooding has impacted water

availability and increased diseases, which affects the food supply. The harsh climate change is also taking a toll on the country's tourism industry as it is becoming harder and harder to protect the wildlife at the national parks because there is not enough food and water to go around for the people, talk less about the animals. Luckily, the campsites have been able to come up with solutions to address its food security problem, like deworming. Deworming prevents the animals from catching diseases and dying, thus, allowing the people to have a secure food supply. Overall, I really enjoyed the conversation that we had with the Kenya campsite as we were able to ask questions on animal conservation, tourism, agriculture, and much more. The Kenyan people are very aware of the impact that climate change is having on their community and are actively trying to come up with effective solutions that can help better the people.

## CAMBODIA

By **HARRY KNIGHT '21**  
*News Editor*

The discussion that I prepared our group for was with the people running the campsite in Cambodia. Based on some of Cambodia's biggest environmental issues, our discussion and research focused on food and water security. This topic was also based on what the campsite leaders focus on in much of their activism. Because much of our capstone project was centered around the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we identified two SDGs that connected best with the issue of food and water security. The first SDG that we identified was SDG 6, Clean Water and Sanitization.

This is an important SDG for any country because it helps to ensure that every citizen has the ability to address their basic needs. With roughly 3 million Cambodians not having access to clean water, SDG 6 on Clean Water and Sanitization should be one of the top priorities so as to ensure that Cambodians have access to these basic things. Another SDG that we identified as necessary in the fight for basic access to clean water and sanitation for Cambodian citizens is SDG 9, focusing on Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure. Not only does the Cambodian government need to address the issues at hand, but the government also needs to find affordable solutions, requiring successful infrastructure projects. One potential solution to SDG 9 that our research provided was taking advantage of Cambodia's strong microfinance sector to allow for successful projects to be implemented.

Although a lot has changed for travel and global learning over the course of this pandemic, our SDG pilot program has shown that with platforms like Zoom, there are still a lot of opportunities to learn as a global scholar. Speaking with real people as

opposed to watching videos or reading articles allowed us to understand the country through their lived experiences along with how other sectors of the country, such as the government or the economy, are also being influenced by climate change. This program

truly allowed us to understand how our daily actions can impact someone halfway across the world; small, daily actions like turning off a light switch, recycling, and conserving water accumulate to make a difference both locally and globally. All of the Earth's

resources are shared and it is up to us to make sure we do our part to take care of our planet. We have thoroughly enjoyed learning about these four countries and hope that this article was able to share what we gained with you.

# Performers Reflect on Their Time with the NEO

By **EMILY KHYM '23**  
*Staff Writer*

The construction of the John D. and Alexander C. Nichols Center for Theater and Dance began this past December. The NEO, referred to as the barn, has become a hallmark of the Loomis Chaffee performing arts. For Loomis performers, the former building holds significance.

Log Melange editor John Howley '21 stated, "As I reflect on my four years as Loomis, the NEO undoubtedly arises as the most formative, impactful, and inspirational feature of my tenure on the Island. While I would love to share one last performance in the intimate barn, I am excited for future Loomis dancers, technicians, and actors to experience heightened performance facilities."

"The experience of being forced to perform without our sacred venue has taught me that the NEO has always been less about the building itself and more about the people inside of it. The performers, the stage managers, the pit players, the technicians, the faculty: each human component to the NEO has not only remained strong but flourished in the face of continued strife. Therefore, though it may hurt not to perform another opening night in the little red barn, I am ex-

ceedingly proud to take part in this iteration of the NEO family and I hope that, after my class leaves this May, generations of students after will continue to contribute to the performing arts at LC," John said.

"As a theatre student, the NEO became a second home for me during my initial years on campus," Ben Radmore '22, another student involved in theater said. "My time performing within those hallowed halls produced numerous irreplaceable memories, and I look back on those days fondly. Of course, construction on the Nichols Center tremendously impacted the productions our company has put on this year, and the open-air nature of the spring musical absolutely complicated the development of our piece. However, we have continually improved despite this uprooted environment, and as a cast we gladly forsake the use of the NEO for the good of countless performers to come."

This new building will house the NEO, dance studios, and a black box theater to offer a more interactive teaching space for the performing arts. The NEO will also be expanded, although it will maintain a similar physical structure as the past NEO. The dance studio will be built with glass walls facing the meadows, and the black box theater will be able to support smaller produc-

tions and classrooms. There will also be a small kitchen for small receptions after productions or during Parents Weekend.

As students involved in performing arts reminisce about the old NEO, they have continually worked hard on their upcoming spring performances in spite of the circum-

stances. While normal facilities are under construction, the Spring Production and Spring Dance Review will be held outside Hubbard on a temporary stage. There will be seats for audiences outside with COVID regulations in mind.



Photo by Stephanie Zhang '21

The temporary outdoor stage where the spring musical recently concluded and where the Spring Dance Review will be performed.



# Cancellation of CLUSH Research Paper Needs to be Temporary

By STACEY ZHANG '22  
Staff Writer

While the 2020 CL U.S. History (“CLUSH”) students have certainly had an engaging year in history, there seems to be something missing—that “dreaded” history research paper.

After trekking through almost 300 years of American History, the now full-fledged CLUSH juniors normally take on the research paper in the spring. While some rejoice and others sigh, this year’s omission of the research paper is an understandable compromise. However, the CLUSH research paper needs to return.

Because of the asynchronous/synchronous schedule and mini-terms this year, virtually all courses across departments have had to cut a significant portion of the normal content. This cut asks all departments the same question: which content is most important?

For the CLUSH faculty, the major conflict lies in spring term: if they choose to include the 15-page history research paper that usually takes up the majority of the term, they would have to cut a significant chunk of 20th century American History from the curriculum.

There certainly is a strong case for the research paper. According to Mr. Harrison Shure, Chair of the History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies Department, when Loomis transitioned away from the AP curriculum around 2017, the construction of CLUSH curriculum was guided by a commitment to prepare students for original research, culminating in the final research paper.

The paper synthesizes the central skills and historical understanding students have developed throughout the year and aligns with both the rigorous expectations and

core principles of this college-level history course. Moreover, students loved it. According to CLUSH teacher Mrs. Lori Calgiuri, former CLUSH students often say that working on the research paper was one of the things they enjoyed most about the class—there’s no better way to engage students than letting them take ownership of their learning.

However, as much as the history buffs get out of the paper, the trade-off is just too significant this year. Just as the Civil War has a hold on American historical imagination, 20th century American history leads straight to us, to the present. Though history is not completely a continuous chain of causal relationships, the preceding century of American history answers many “whys” of today.

For many Loomis students, CLUSH is also their last systematic exposure to U.S. history, and for some, the only one. I can’t expect too much from middle school U.S. history, as the dates and names memorized for exams fade in people’s memories, only leaving a vague imagery of the wars and leg-ends.

Omitting the history research paper allows CLUSH faculty and students to explore beyond the public’s broad memory of American History into the complexities and nuances, the weaker voices, and lesser-seen sources. The discussion of historiography in CLUSH also guides students to tolerate ambiguity, a trait often distinctly different from students’ previous exposure to history. Letting a student’s education about 20th century America end in middle school is problematic.

In order to replace some of the benefits of the research paper, CLUSH teachers have developed smaller research assignments in the spring, including a five-page research



Photo by Stacey Zhang '22

Janus Yuen '21 reads *The American Historical Review* for his CL US History class.

paper on a historical site related to 1960s or 1970s American history. Preserving some freedom in choice, the project allows students to practice original and thoughtful writing and research despite its shortened length.

Nonetheless, history research paper remains irreplaceable. Alumnus Aarman Pan-nu '20 described the research paper as the “bastion of the CLUSH curriculum,” that it was what made CLUSH different from all other high school history classes and other Loomis classes.

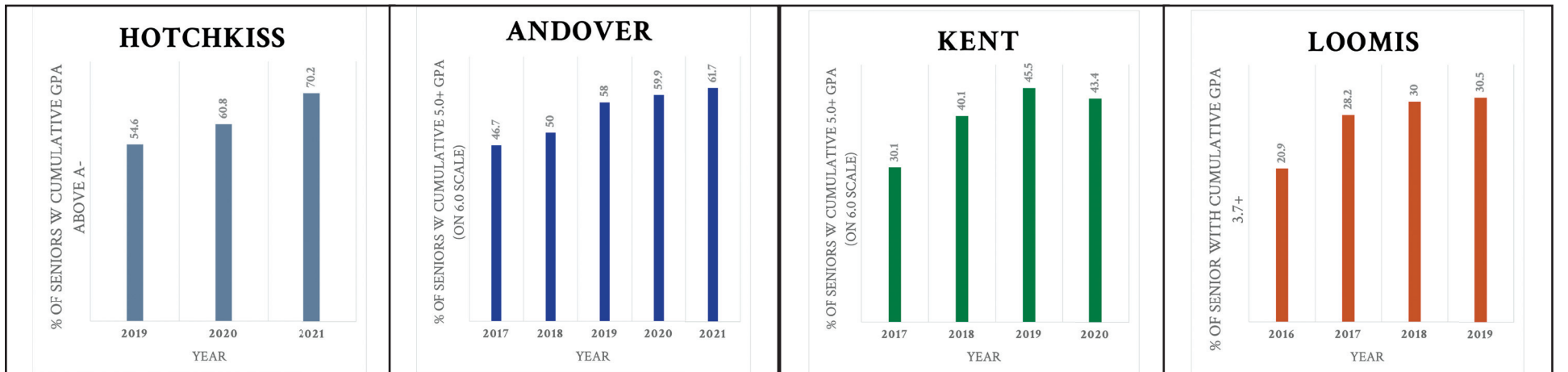
Students learn, for the first time in their Loomis career, to synthesize an argument backed by a wide array of evidence. Contrary to a smaller research assignment, you can’t sprint and equivocate, you can’t just “get it over with.” A 15-page research paper pushes students out of their comfort zones, and forces them to slow down and fully explore the nuances of their topic. The methodical

break-down of the writing process and faculty’s guidance provide students with the support to finish this ambitious capstone.

Many past CLUSH students enjoyed writing the research paper as well. With their interests ranging from Supreme Court history to Barbary pirates, students can wander into the branches and corners of history and go down rabbit holes of JSTOR articles and historical files. They take control of their topic, research, and narrative, which bears organic enthusiasm.

The research paper, at the end of the day, is also a rite of passage. Finishing a 15-page original research paper in high school seems like an otherwise impossible undertaking. The pride of the accomplishment and the confidence CLUSH students take away from the project cannot be replaced by any other design.

## Empirical Evidence Shows Grade Inflation at LC



Graphic by Kelly Xue '21

By LILY POTTER '21 and  
RYAN FORTANI '22

Opinions Editor and News Editor

Continued from front page.

Other schools in the Founders League and the Ten School Admissions Organization have experienced similar levels of grade inflation. Hotchkiss, Choate, Andover, and Kent have experienced grade inflation throughout the past several years as evidenced by the change in GPA distribution on the school profiles.

However, this similarity between Loomis and its peer schools was not always the case. According to Director of Studies Tim Lawrence, “About 10 years ago...we had some really interesting discussions where we were looking at data, and we were looking at our peer schools and acknowledging that we had grade deflation versus others...It is less that there is an intentional aim towards grade inflation, and, instead, there was an intentional set of discussions around grading practice, and what constitutes excellent, good, or poor work.”

So what are possible explanations for this trend within Loomis?

In a March 2014 letter, Head of School Dr. Sheila Culbert cited three possible causes for grade inflation: stronger students, more effective teachers, and larger nationwide trends.

However, despite defending the trend of

higher grades, Dr. Culbert did acknowledge in her letter that “grade inflation compresses grades at the top end of the scale, which, in turn, makes it harder and harder to distinguish the very best students from the merely bright or hardworking and diligent students” and later mentioned that “this compression may disadvantage exceptional students, but resisting grade inflation would undoubtedly disadvantage other students, too.”

Director of College Guidance Mr. Rion stated that if grade inflation increases too much, “It’s a little bit harder for a college to look at 30 Loomis applicants and clearly tell who our best are. That’s not necessarily a bad thing. It certainly doesn’t hurt or help us in terms of how many students get in. It may change the students who get in. It may mean that instead of them saying ‘this student is slightly better than this student so we’re gonna take them,’ they might decide based on other factors between two students whose transcripts are tied. “Transcripts as a tool of differentiating students become a little less helpful for colleges.”

Therefore, from a college admissions perspective, although Loomis matriculation as a whole might not be impacted, a student’s ability to differentiate themselves in a transcript diminishes.

Mr. Rion also addressed admissions officers’ ability to understand the context of grading at each school. “One of the reasons why I don’t think college is impacted that much is that colleges are really good about

understanding context,” he said. “If Loomis changed its scale tomorrow and started using the full-scale and a bunch of people got Cs and a bunch of people got Bs, colleges would adjust to that. Colleges are reading us in context of what we are.”

Yet, if colleges are able to readily adapt to these changes in grading standards, if Loomis were to change its grading scale to reverse this trend of grade inflation, the school would not be significantly harmed in the college process either way, refuting the claim that we must stay consistent with our peer schools or nationwide trends to stay competitive in the college process. If this is truly the case, why allow the internal harms of grade inflation—a lack of academic differentiators and grades no longer being a motivator—to exist if the school’s college outcomes would not be hurt with more rigorous grading?

Regarding the point of Loomis accepting stronger students and having more effective teachers, whether this is true or not is not relevant to our argument. Even if the overall quality of both students and teachers has increased, grades should be used as relative metrics to differentiate between and motivate students.

Perhaps, in an ideal world, students would seek to excel academically for a love of learning and genuine interest in the subjects that they are studying. Alas, we must accept that grades are a significant motivator for many people, and, in order to get the

best academic performance out of students, grading standards should be rigorous.

Some may argue that grades should not be used to differentiate students but rather should be used to indicate absolute achievement by each student based on a set of target skills. Others argue that grades are a form of feedback for students. However, teachers can indicate in other ways, such as written comments and feedback, if a student meets this target set of skills. Furthermore, at Loomis, a school with so many high-achieving and motivated students, this conception of absolute achievement becomes less useful because so many students will meet that standard.

Grades serve the fundamental educational purposes of differentiating between students and motivating students to do their best work. If our grading scale effectively consists of B+, A-, A, and A+, it is impossible to tell the students who particularly excel in a class from those who are competent. Students can stay content with their B+/A- averages just by doing the bare minimum whereas if there was a less compressed grading scale, students would be incentivized to work harder to improve their grades. Ultimately, can we truly maintain academic rigor as an institution while allowing the progression of a grading system that is so detrimental to education?



# Family Visits: Worth The Risks?

By LILLIAN CLARK '24  
Contributor

On March 26, 2021, an email was sent out to all Loomis Chaffee boarding students. The email announced that parents were allowed to come to campus and visit. But are these visits worth the risk both for COVID as well as homesickness? And are the restrictions being monitored closely enough? While family visitations seem warranted given some students have not had the opportunity to see their families in months, I worry COVID-19 regulations aren't being followed closely enough.

As a boarder on campus who is unable to leave until May 20, I thought that the opportunity to see my family was too good to pass up. However, since a significant number of LC students' family members don't live very close to campus, Loomis got creative, and had extended family or grandparents visit instead.

While homesickness is a prominent result after any visit is over, the ability to see your family after spending months away from home is a wonderful treat, even if students must socially distance themselves and wear masks. The prerequisite that students and their families must follow certain COVID-19 guidelines brings up the question of how these rules would be enforced.

In the original email sent to parents, the rules and restrictions were clearly laid out. The school required parents to get tested before arrival and asked that they practiced good COVID precautions for at least one

week prior to visitation.

The email also specifically requested that "while on campus, all visitors must stay out of dorms, socially distanced, masked... do not bring meals to share with students during the visit."

This message to both students and parents had been well laid out throughout the week leading up to the first visitation weekend. It was also a reasonable request, since the visitation rules fell within the scope of day-to-day COVID-19 protocols at Loomis.

However, there was a surprising lack of supervision on the visitation day to ensure the visitation protocols were being followed. COVID-19 protocols have been a huge focus of Loomis Chaffee since the beginning of the year, yet little was done to assure visitors followed COVID-19 protocols. Despite Loomis having upheld the following of COVID-19 protocols as a necessity in order to provide in-person learning, the school seemed to do little to ensure that visitors were following the rules.

In hindsight, Loomis should have expected that families might bend Loomis' COVID-19 rules after having spent long periods apart. Wouldn't you want to hug your close family member?

The touches with home life that students can experience through family visitation have both benefits and drawbacks. One benefit is that after visitations, students might find new energy and preparedness to go on and challenge the final weeks of school.

However there is a chance that students might become more homesick after seeing



Photo by Khushi Mahajan '22

Khushi Mahajan '22 and her brother pose for a photo during family visitation.

their family for the paltry duration of a single hour. It seems that among students, this "post-visit slump" was a common occurrence after the normal Family Weekend in October.

So, with that in mind, should visits continue to be allowed? Or do they pose a threat to the community's physical and mental welfare?

I believe that there exists immense ben-

efits of seeing your family after spending a long time away from home, particularly during COVID-19 pandemic. And yes, while homesickness is an inevitable emotion that burrows into a corner of all boarding students' hearts, we could hope that visitation will mitigate it from time to time.

## LC Should Rethink the Workjob Common App

By CHLOE CHEN '22 and NICHOLAS JI '22  
Staff Writers

In a year already filled with countless modifications, Loomis Chaffee has extended last spring's change in the leadership positions' application process to create an entirely new system.

To give rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors an easier experience, Loomis decided to use the Community Workjob Program (CWP) Common Application for all workjob leadership positions. The application format includes three questions simply about being a leader in the Loomis community, plus supplements for each position you plan to apply for, and asks you to select one as your first choice.

This expedited process may seem beneficial at the moment, but it diminishes the uniqueness of each applicant and waters down the selectivity of the whole process. The restricting word limits also fail to provide an adequate space for each applicant to fully express themselves.

It is difficult for applicants to present themselves as different from every other applicant with the limiting questions and inhibiting word limits. Only having two or three supplement questions in addition to the three leadership questions consistent across all applications also inhibits the applicants' individuality. Different workjobs may be suited for different types of people, and the absence of uniqueness in the application prompts can take away from applicants' op-

portunity to showcase their own ideas, perspectives, and personalities.

Further, the simplified process and more accessible application may prompt more under-qualified people to apply. Before the CWP Common App, each leadership position within the CWP had a specific set of questions that required thorough responses.

With the current changes, people who would have previously chosen not to apply may be more inclined to do so, simply because of the application's lowered complexity and not because they genuinely desire the position. These applicants could increase competition for the dedicated applicants who are actually willing to put in a serious effort, lessening the likelihood of the most qualified person taking the position.

Applicants may also be incentivized to apply for multiple positions within the Common App due its accessibility, instead of applying for a few unique, sincerely-coveted positions. They may apply for these positions with a "Why not?" attitude, and not out of sincere belief that they may be a suitable leader for the community.

The simplicity of the new applications may provide momentary relief for students, but simultaneously acts to undermine the discerning ability of the selection process. While suitable as a temporary measure to lessen the burden on students during a particularly stressful year, it may benefit Loomis to revise the new Common App with the long-term wellbeing of our community in mind.

*"This expedited process may seem beneficial at the moment, but it diminishes the uniqueness of each applicant."*

## Los Mariachis: The Tastiest Food Truck Yet



Photo by Helen Shen '23

The Los Mariachis food truck serving students food in the Hubbard parking lot.

By HELEN SHEN '23  
Contributor

In recent weeks, the Los Mariachis food truck from Wallingford, Connecticut has come to the Loomis Chaffee School three times. The events were arranged by the Student Activities Organization (StuActs) and have been a great success among students. In fact, I claim that Los Mariachis is the best food truck we've had.

I say this simply because the food tastes amazing. Especially during the chilly evenings we have here, what we crave more than anything is a warm Mexican dish. We sniff out the wisps of that smoky burrito long before reaching the truck, which usually parks in the Hubbard parking lot.

The actual dishes have a perfect balance of saltiness and ingredients. Once we have our first bite of the savory taste, there is no stopping us from devouring more. The food is that good.

"[The Los Mariachis] food truck reminds me of my home. I used to eat at its restaurant, and the restaurant is near my home. The food has always been really good," Jill Rinaldi '23, who lives in Wallingford, Connecticut, said.

Furthermore, the food truck provides multiple custom choices, similar to what the fast-food restaurant Subway provides. The two main dishes served are tacos and burritos. For sauces, students can choose from two options of mild or spicy sauce. As for the meat, the options are beef, chicken, spicy pork, etc.

Because of the variety of options, students of all ranges of preferences can craft their desired dish. For example, students that are not used to the spicy Mexican cuisine can select meat that is not spicy with a mild sauce.

Although the waiters and waitresses customize our orders, students do not wait in the line for long periods. This is true despite the fact that a substantial number of students seek food trucks on weekends. Even if a long line forms, students typically wait for only about 10 minutes, since the waiters and waitresses are efficient.

Everytime the Los Mariachis truck arrives on campus, students are always quite excited to visit the truck. We greatly appreciate the food and the service, and we try to make sure the waiters and waitresses feel our appreciation.



# A Look into Spring Sports Games 4/17/2021



Photo by Stephanie Zhang '21

Varsity boys tennis captain Langston Woody '21 prepares for his match.



Photo by Jamie Fiedorek '21

Chandler Coe '23 plays on varsity boys baseball in a match against Hotchkiss.



Photo by Stephanie Zhang '21

Olaus Alinen '23 competes in shotput at track and field meet.



Photo by Stephanie Zhang '21

Varsity boys lacrosse player Kyle Becker '21 plays in a match against Hotchkiss.



Photo by Jamie Fiedorek '21

Pole vaulter CJ Bukowski '23 competes at a track and field meet.



Photo by Stephanie Zhang '21

Henry Deng '23 (right) and varsity boys team captain Heisen Kong '21 (left) competing in the hurdles event.



Photo by Stephanie Zhang '21

Girls track team runs in Saturday's meet.

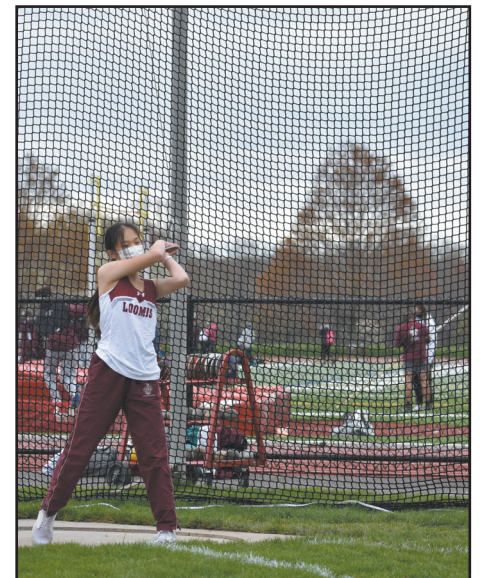


Photo by Stephanie Zhang '21

Piyaluk Danchavijitr '24 prepares to throw the discus.



# Jacob Bryson '16 Makes NHL Debut



Photo courtesy of Mr. John Cunningham

Jacob Bryson '16 played on the Loomis Chaffee boys' varsity hockey team in the 2014-15 season.

By **MADISON CARR '21**  
Contributor

Former Loomis Chaffee boys' varsity hockey defenseman Jacob Bryson '16 recently made his debut in the National Hockey League. The Canadian-born athlete now plays professionally for the Buffalo Sabres after previously playing professionally in the American Hockey League for the Rochester Americans.

Bryson attended Loomis for his Junior year in 2014-15 before moving on to play

for the Omaha Lancers in Nebraska as a part of the United States Hockey League. After his time playing junior hockey, Bryson moved on to playing at Providence College for three seasons starting in 2016. During his time there Bryson was drafted 99th in 2017 for the Sabres, who he now plays for.

His former Loomis coach, Mr. John Zavisza, answered some questions about Bryson as a player and as a person on campus.

"I knew that he was a good player and definitely an exceptional player, probably

the best skater we have ever had here," Mr. Zavisza said. He also mentioned that Jacob is 5'9" so, "you need to be pretty special and pretty dynamic to make it at that size."

When asked "What was he like as a player of yours?" and "What did he add to the team?" Mr. Zavisza replied by saying how Jacob had a "great shot" and "great speed." He elaborated by saying how Jacob was "very dynamic in his movement" and how "he could create separation from guys that were on him pretty easily just from his agility and explosiveness power. He was able

to create a lot of space for himself and help us break the puck out quick. He had a great shot which was great for our power play."

In addition, Mr. Zavisza noted some statistical work he did a few years back to analyze all of the Loomis Chaffee boys' hockey teams and said that the team Bryson played for was probably "the best team in Loomis history."

Mr. Zavisza talked about how Jacob helped develop the hockey program. "He fit into our style. He added some offensive flare to our style which is more typical of us now. We were kind of evolving into a more offensive-defensive team. He definitely helped us make that transition. He helped us grow as much as we helped him grow." Mr. Zavisza mentioned how in the following years they searched for a "Bryson-type player" in their recruiting process.

Among Mr. Zavisza's comments about Jacob on the hockey team, he shared the following story of Jacob to demonstrate just how impressive he was as an athlete in general: "He wanted to try lacrosse out in the spring of his junior year. So he went out for thirds, and he played with thirds [team] for about three weeks before they brought him to varsity where he was playing defensive-midfield for the varsity lacrosse team after a short time."

Jacob was not only an excellent hockey player, but an impressive athlete overall. "Another thing about Jacob was that he was very fit. He didn't come here to get in shape. He came in shape," Mr. Zavisza noted.

Mr. Zavisza also reflected on Jacob's personality outside of hockey. "He was a goofy, funny kid and known as a prankster in the dorms. He wasn't just this hockey robot. Really nice, good kid."

Wearing number eighty-seven, Jacob Bryson made his NHL debut for the Sabres on February 22, 2021 in a game against the New Jersey Devils, and soon after scored his first NHL goal on March 6, 2021 in a game against the New York Islanders.

## The Loomis Chaffee Log

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Month Day, 2019

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## March Madness Fever Sweeps the Island

By **JAKE KLEIN '23**  
Contributor

Few professional sporting events captivate the Island—and the nation—like March Madness. Although this year's NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament was played in front of limited-capacity crowds in Indianapolis, it didn't disappoint, and its impact was still felt over 800 miles away on the Loomis Chaffee campus.

Although 1-seeded Baylor took down Gonzaga, another 1-seed, for the title, the tournament field was littered with Cinderella runs, most notably by Oral Roberts and UCLA (Cinderella team or Cinderella story are used to refer to situations in which competitors achieve far greater success than expected). The former had the nation's attention, becoming just the second 15-seed ever to advance two rounds to the Sweet 16. The latter reached the Final Four while seeded 11th and nearly took down the powerhouse Zags, who needed a last-second half-court heave from freshman Jalen Suggs to beat the Bruins.

In the championship, Baylor handed Gonzaga its first and only loss of the season, thanks to a stout defensive effort and a cold shooting night from Suggs and Corey Kispert. Baylor's Jared Butler was named the tournament's Most Outstanding Player. 18 years after taking over a woeful Bears program in 2003, Scott Drew delivered Baylor its first-ever championship in its first Final Four appearance since 1950.

As always, part of the tournament's appeal was the ability for fans to fill out a bracket, predicting the outcome of each game before

the tournament begins. Since 1977, brackets have been a March staple, and for the 44th consecutive year, there were no known perfect entries.

"It's a great tradition," said Graham Wolman '23, whose bracket finished in the 99th percentile on ESPN's Tournament Challenge app. "It was awesome to be watching here on campus this year."

Rock Battistoni, the Loomis Chaffee varsity boys' basketball coach, was part of the George Washington team that fell in the first round of the tournament to Georgia Tech in 2005. "For me there is no better sporting event than March Madness," Mr. Battistoni said.

*"For me there is no better sporting event than March Madness." —Mr. Battistoni*

"It can bring together the die-hard and the casual college basketball fan, and it will certainly leave everyone scratching their heads on why they did not have Oral Roberts defeating Ohio State," Mr.

Battistoni said.

Mr. Battistoni's team made the Big Dance, but no Loomis Chaffee alum has ever played in the tournament. However, with former Pelicans now at Stanford, Dayton, UNLV, and Davidson among other D1 schools, it may not be long before an alum makes his tournament debut. Nate Santos '21, who recently committed to play basketball at Pittsburgh, aspires to become one of the first.

"It has always been a dream and aspiration of mine to play in [March Madness] one day. It would mean so much to be a part of such a national and historic tournament and I'm hoping one day that dream might come true," Nate said. University of Pittsburgh last made an appearance in March Madness in 2016.



# Spring Horoscopes

By MERCURI LAM '24  
Contributor

## Taurus

Spring is your favorite season on the island. You adore the life and blossoming flowers everywhere around you. Even the rain has its own bit of charm. With all the energy you have, exploring the 300 acres of campus seems like a piece of cake. You're a wild child, and nothing can stop you now.

## Aquarius

As winter melts into spring, you find yourself trying to become closer with the Earth and its synergies. After sitting outside meditating to yoga for what seemed like hours (it was 10 minutes), eating mushrooms you foraged (they were a bit unwashed), and pressing leaves and flowers (you accidentally grabbed a handful of poison ivy), you are feeling more connected than ever... or maybe you are just delirious.

## Capricorn

From frolicking in the meadows to picnicking with friends by the Farmington, you have never enjoyed a more lovely springtime. But your allergic reactions to bugs and bees have also found their way back, and you end up spending your days in the health center, looking out longingly into the fields.

## Aries

With the coming of spring, you find

yourself being in your element more than ever, and you decide to fuel that energy into... SPORTS! You try baseball (you can't throw, or hit...or catch), lacrosse (you don't even know what lacrosse is), and tennis (you can't react fast enough), but needless to say, they were all unsuccessful endeavors. At the end of the day, you find your high spirit and big voice to be in the glorious position of... track manager. (As long as you get to spend time in the sun, you're happy, I suppose.)

## Leo

The sunny weather has been welcoming to you and your frivolous activities. Picnicking in the meadows, sunbathing in the grass, and listening to birds and indie music, your days have been spent in a hazy and dreamy blur. People may call you eccentric, but in your eyes, you're just living your best life.

## Sagittarius

The springtime sunshine outside your window seems tempting, but you worry too much about the details of going outside. What if there are ticks? Mosquitoes? Bees? What if the sun is too bright and you get burnt? What if the air is too humid or too warm and you overheat? Stop overthinking and just relax! It's spring, after all...

## Libra

Take some deep breaths with me and stop worrying about your assignments:

in... out... in... out... The assignments may seem daunting, but the great outdoors awaits you! Just do your work later and you'll do fine. I promise.

## Pisces

The snow has melted into spring, and you're surprisingly ecstatic for the annual flood of the meadows. Sure, the rain may sound miserable to some, but it's right up your alley. Spending your days jumping into puddles and looking for frogs, the spring rain is where you belong.

## Gemini

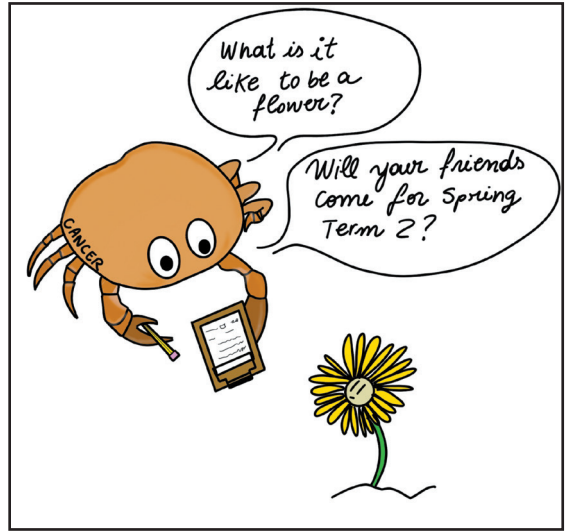
The warm breeze caresses your skin as you sit in the shadows of the quad. While you may seem like a studious student who's being extremely productive, once people come near you, they'll inevitably discover you're just watching YouTube videos.

## Scorpio

The college decisions you've gotten have made you overly excited for what is coming next, but it also has given you an EXTREME case of senioritis. Your spring sport for the past 4 years is now replaced with art immersion and your CLs are all now term courses; you've become a shell of the person you were in terms long gone (and we don't blame you).

## Cancer

While everyone is enjoying the sun out in the meadows and the quad, you have decided to take a stroll in the woods to get inspired by nature for your next big art project. May-



Graphic by Sofia Mansilla '23

be you'll write about the never ending circle of life for your next writing submission (insert existential crisis moment),

## Virgo

The coming of spring usually means lots of downtime and relaxing in the sun, but your drive and ambition has made you stay on the grind. First, you have your 5 AP exams, then you have to practice for your SATs and ACTs, then you need to apply to summer internships, and then you have to get started on studying for your CL classes for next year...the grind never stops.

# Breaking News: Scientists Discover That People Only Read Headlines for Information

By ANDREW PARK '22  
Mélange Editor

Breaking News: Local factory generously promises to offer housing for unaccompanied minors; spokesperson says "We have plenty of space for kids with lots of fun, hands-on activities like sewing and leather-working."

Breaking News: New Zoom filter makes it look like you're wearing pants, representative claims "it also gives you a pair of nice shoes and a full pedicure"

Breaking News: New eugenics research claims people who believe there to be a clear

difference in "inferior" and "superior" genes are "inherently inferior"

Breaking News: Zoom servers crash as people rush to get free shoes, "wait, I want one too," says wri—

Breaking News: 23 year old man learns how to search things up on Google, becomes CTO of Microsoft

Breaking News: Florida man claims to have invented the first stable nuclear fusion reactor within the Solar System, threatens to bathe every human in deadly radiation

# What Do Cows Do With Their Milk Money?

By ETHAN SONG '24  
Contributor

I believe it is safe to say that we all share at least one common memory: browsing the dairy aisle for the perfect carton of milk. However, not many of us have stopped and wondered, "What do the cows do with the money they get from selling milk?" Surely, cows don't have a system of exchange, right? Even if they did, it would be more realistic for them to have a sort of bartering system.

However, animals have been observed to understand the concept of money. A 2006 experiment led by Keith Chen found that Capuchin monkeys were able to understand and appreciate the power of silver "purchasing tokens." They used them to purchase and trade for goods, like grapes, and soon enough, some monkeys began dabbling in the business of other... animalistic desires.

But the question still remains unanswered: what do cows use their money for? If we're paying money to buy their milk, they must be getting at least a sizable cut of the profit, right?

For starters, cows need to maintain families too. Feeding a family of three (or more) is not cheap, especially as a single moo-ther. According to the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, one Holstein calf should be fed 5-6 pounds of grain a day, typically starter feed, in addition to hay. Calves are distinctly picky, and can pick out components in their feed that they do not like.

If they don't like the taste or texture of the feed, they will often eat less than what they are supposed to, which, as any responsible adult knows, is not good. As such, better-off



Photo by Julie Chung '21

**A cow contemplating the profit from their milk to feed their family of three (or more.)**

bovines will be able to afford specific meals that their calves will enjoy. The less-fortunate livestock, however, cannot afford such a luxury. Such is life in a cutthroat market.

Corruption is also rampant in the (live) Stock Market, as higher-up moo-ficials dictate whether a cow will get sent to the slaughterhouse or not. Of course, dairy cows don't; however, their loved ones may. Thus, they bribe the cow-ordinators to turn their snouts another direction, should the fated time come.

It has also been proven that cows share a collective hive mind. Evidence suggests that they may be paying tribute to extraterrestrials, in the form of gold, silver, donkeys, and other valuable commodities, so that they do not destroy the Earth. Though there is dairily any evidence, a tauru-mendous number of eyewitness accounts have been recorded throughout history, dating back as far as the 18th century.

# The Deaths of Our Childhood

By GABRIEL JIANG '24  
Contributor

## Caillou

Caillou was born on September 15, 1997 at the age of four and then proceeded to never age for thirteen years, much to the chagrin joy of his parents. He spent his days doing what most post-toddler children do: being a stubborn brat. He would often refuse to listen to his parents and would throw a tantrum every time he could not get what he wanted, just like what every parent dreams of. Unfortunately, this perfect angel of a child met his inevitable end on October 3, 2010 due to natural causes. Unsurprisingly, he was four years old at the time of his untimely demise. He has no surviving immediate family members, so gifts will be accepted at 1141 St Clair Ave W, Toronto, ON M6E 1B1, Canada.

## Teletubbies

The Teletubbies were born on March 31, 1997. While their ages have never been identified, we are grateful they've been around for 4 years. Well, mostly grateful. The Teletubbies were supposedly astronauts that spent most of the time running around in a field with a sun-baby (literally) in the sky and bringing joy to (read: terrorizing) little kids. Sadly, they met their end on February 16, 2001 due to their being "unintentionally scary." Their age still has yet to be identified. Their remaining relatives

have specifically requested that no gifts are to be sent, so we will not be accepting any.

## Barney & Friends

Barney was born on April 6, 1992 at the young age of 200,000,000. (He may have been close to discovering the secret to immortality.) For 18 years, he spent many of his days entertaining small children and providing free, immersive horror movie experiences called nightmares. He passed away on November 10, 2010 after being brought down by a lawsuit from the United States government for "permanently scarring the children of America." We could not contact any immediate family members, and gifts are not being accepted due to a special request.

## Super Why!

The main cast of Super Why! was born on September 3, 2007, all at the age of 10. The program garnered love and affection from children for years because Dream and Technoblade—sorry, we mean Whyatt and Pig—were the stars of the show. For nine years, they adventured into numerous fairytales and solved all of their problems through the power of words, spelling, the alphabet, and reading. Unfortunately, they all passed away at the same time on May 12, 2016 due to unknown causes. Gifts are being accepted at 1555 Southgate Rd Bldg 26, Arlington, VA 22214. They will be missed.



# Senior Path Proposals for the Class of 2021

By **STEPHANIE ZHANG '21**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

We've heard it time and time again since the pandemic started—the word “unprecedented.” Consequently, in honor of how “unprecedented” these times have been, I want the Senior Path Design, a reflection of the Class of 2021's time at Loomis Chaffee, to be the same. And since the Class of 2021's square is at the crossroads of two paths, I also wanted to take advantage of this unique placement and think outside the box (or square, if you will) to come up with some truly unique designs.

### 1. A Patch of Grass

Just picture it. Brick on top, brick on the bottom, brick on the right, brick on the left, and a piece of luxurious grass right in the middle.

### 2. Walking Hazard

Just lay down bricks in no specific pattern but raise the middle tile that says “Class of 2021” slightly higher so that every time someone walks across the square, there's a chance of them tripping.

### 3. Fill it with concrete and let the faculty dogs walk on it while wet

I feel like that's an accurate summary of how this year has gone.

### 4. Construction Cones

Drill in four orange traffic cones around the square and cement them into the ground. Then add some construction tape as a final touch. The square will always look like it's under construction, just as the campus has been for the past 4+ years.

### 5. Puzzle Pieces

We make a ten thousand piece brick puzzle, but one piece is missing, so when you look at the square, you're immediately agitated.

### 6. Outdoor Rink

Implement a block of artificial fake ice to commemorate the era of the outdoor ice rink and test people's balance when they're running late to class. You could also practice a variety of winter sports on it, like figure skating.



Photo by Stephanie Zhang '21

The the design for the 2020 block is currently under construction and soon to be completed.

# Improvements For the Drive-Thru Campus Tour

By **WILL HOWLEY '23**  
*Staff Writer*

On April 3, 2021, Loomis Chaffee hosted a drive-thru campus tour for prospective students. While this event was seemingly successful, I have a few propositions that would bolster our yield rate and give a more accurate representation of life at Loomis.

### 1. Drive through Grubbs Quad

While the drive-thru tour showed most of campus, it left out the most quintessential and historic aspect of Loomis: Grubbs Quad. Without a doubt, students and their parents were considerably perplexed when they could not find the location of “that one picture of Founders” that is used a million times over to advertise the school.

Essentially, these kids felt catfished, and I do not blame them. This is why I believe the tour should have consisted exclusively of Buggies and Smart cars so families could shimmy their way through the narrow passageways and ride along the senior path as a stampede of angry 12th graders simultaneously berates and informs them about our hallowed tradition.

### 2. Food

I don't know about you, but when I hear “drive-thru,” I think chicken tenders, french fries, and a McFlurry. So when the drive through tour did not serve any of the above, I thought this was a bit bamboozling. Loomis should have taken the opportunity to make the world's longest, most convoluted drive-thru ever, that, at the very least, rewards a hamburger at the end to prospective students for listening to students lecture them about how interactive the PHI is and how being in the NEO changed their lives.

### 3. Drive by the windows of crying students

When the families drove by, they saw bands of concerningly happy, energetic students that would make it seem as if we were all members of the most well-meaning cult on the planet. It was almost as if homework and upcoming chemistry tests did not exist. But alas, they do, and that is why the demeanor of Loomis students could have been more accurately shown by looking into the windows of dorms and watching as children toil over history projects and English essays while stress-eating Cocoa Puffs from the dining hall. Go Pelicans!

# How to Get a 5 on the SAT

By **MADISON HUA '23**  
*Social Media Manager*

As we near the end of the academic year, the usual lineup of standardized tests, such as the SAT, ACT, and AP, are fast approaching. As a way to guide you through these tumultuous tests, here is a guide to my favorite preparation tips.

First, cleanse your eyes with some water. Make sure you can see after hours of re-reading the same lines from your ACT prep manual over the sound of your roommate blasting ALDC without headphones.

Second, have a mini dance party in your room, or, should I say, pity party. Jam out to some Taylor Swift and dance your stress away. As Ariana Grande once sang, “some days, things just take way too much energy.” Yup. Ms. Grande said it right: studying takes way too much of my energy, and it just drains the living daylight out of me. Sometimes it's just better to get up and dance.

Third, clean your entire room. I see that candy wrapper on your desk and that dirty sock hidden in the corner of your room. When was the last time you swept your floors? I'm telling you now, wash all your clothes and sheets. Vacuum the floors. Sweep. Mop. Clean out your fridge. I mean, there's probably three week old moldy

cheese in there. Literally just clean everything.

Fourth, crawl into your backpack and become a turtle. Face it. You're statistically not going to get a good score. You're probably going to go back home for the summer and your parents will lecture about how you don't know how to study. Take all your textbooks out of your backpack and live out your last days as a turtle.

Next, ACTUALLY STUDY. Scrap everything I just said and put those reading glasses on to start memorizing your vocab words. Spend a good hour every day reviewing the content and structure of the test. Try doing a blank page review of each chapter.

Last step, drink an energy drink right before the test. I swear—this helps! I know you were probably scrolling on your phone for a good couple hours and barely had any sleep. So a Redbull would be a wise choice. Anything EXCEPT for coffee, as you don't want to have to get up in the middle of the test to use the bathroom...

If all else fails, just circle “C” for every answer. From all your studying, you should at least know that C stands for correct.

With this extraordinary guide, you will be all set for your next SAT, ACT, and/or AP test!

# Gavin Reviews Cultural Outburst: It's Definitely Not Dining Hall Food!

By **GAVIN ANDERSON '22**  
*Columnist*

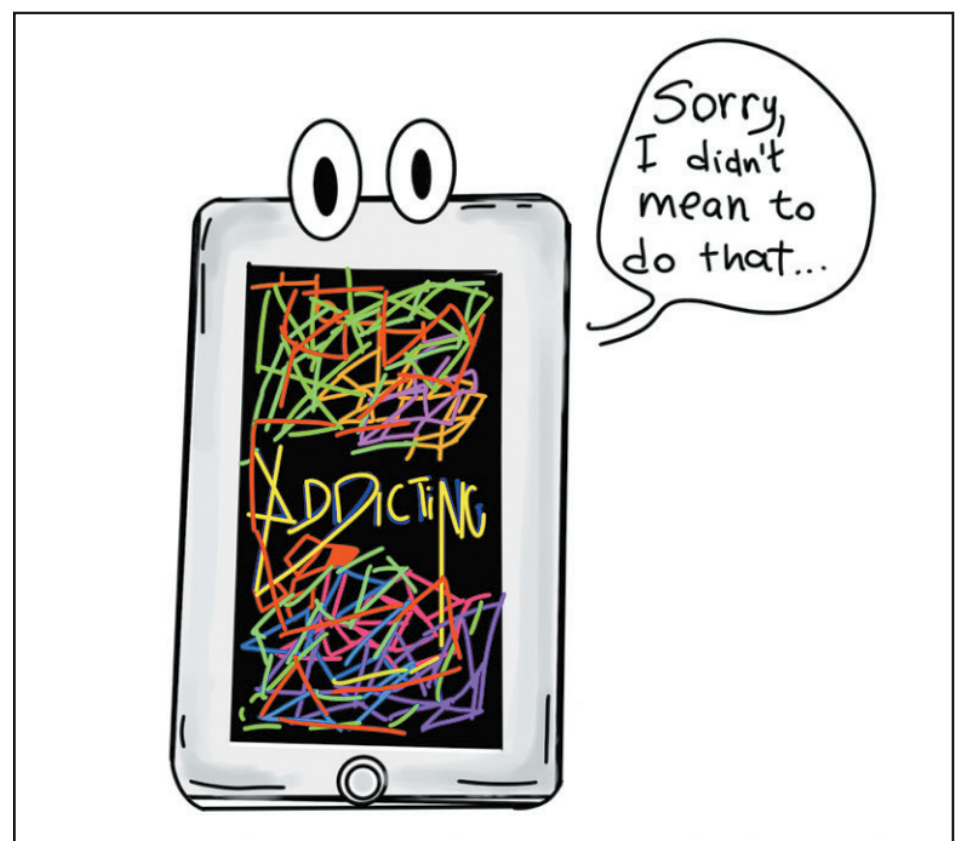
On April 10, Loomis Chaffee's “Cultural Outburst” event took place on Grubbs Quad under the cover of the beautiful trees and long-awaited spring weather. The highlight of the event: the student-made cultural cuisine that stole the show.

From Brazilian chocolate balls, which many students were greedily hoarding, to different productions from Korea, Armenia, and Jamaica, the circle of tables in Grubbs Quad was absolutely overflowing with international delicacies. Not only that, but music was also playing, kids were laughing, and the community was learning all about both the world and the diversity of LC inhabitants.

The Brazilian food truck, parked in the middle of the quad, was a welcome addition to the night. The truck provided authentic Brazilian chicken stew and rice as the latest member in the impressive fleet of food trucks that have come to campus this year. Food trucks have saved Loomis Chaffee weekends during pseudo-quarantine life, and this night was no exception.

Other highlights from the night were the highly coveted dumplings from the China table and the Ramune from the Japan table. Pelicans got to share pieces of their home and heritage with their community in a space for everyone to enjoy. Congratulations to all the student master chefs who orchestrated such a tremendous success!

# Nomophobia



Graphic by Sofia Mansilla '23



# How to Get Off Campus for Your COVID-19 Vaccine

By Isabella Jiang '22 and Lana Sheng '22  
Contributor and Staff Writer

DISCLAIMER: DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME

Order up! The COVID-19 vaccine is finally here: the Loomis Chaffee boarder's excuse to get a taste of the outside world, with the side benefit of gaining immunity to some random virus or whatever. Today, we have Agent FLASHING LIGHTS AND CONFETTI and Agent X presenting to you with multiple ways to escape campus.

Alright, this is Agent FLASHING LIGHTS AND CONFETTI here to tell you my top secret, foolproof plan. First, check to see if there is anyone watching. If there aren't any, then that's your chance to wait for an audience so you can wow them with your spectacle!

Once you have an appropriately-sized audience looking at you strangely, you may commence your plan. Sprint for the holy bridge! Oh, did I mention, you will be doing this in a giant hamster ball? Man, those things are unstoppable. Once you're rolling... you're on a roll!

Keep rolling through the bridge! Pump those legs! Get those gains! If you hear campus security cars revving behind you, it's time to bring out the big guns—an extra shiny disco ball, that is. Crank up some hits from Kidz Bop, and live up to the name of Agent FLASHING LIGHTS AND CONFETTI by bringing out... you guessed it: flashing lights and confetti! The reflective surface of our extra shiny disco ball, combined with the dizzying colorful lights, questionable music, and glitter confetti will discombobulate the Loomis authorities.

Hopefully by now, you will hear campus security's tires screech to a halt and that is victory #1. But your battle isn't over yet! You must make it to 219 Broad St, Windsor, CT to get that hallowed jab.

There is a slight uphill, so you must really pump those legs now. Make the track coaches proud and put Usain Bolt to shame. When you've gained enough speed, you can break free of your hamster ball and somersault (is it practical? Heck no! Is it fun? Heck yes! Agent FLASHING LIGHTS AND CONFETTI is all about the fun) your way to CVS. Once you roll up to those automatic sliding doors and step foot on CVS's carpet (which always has a weird stain on it, no matter which location), you are in the clear! Success! Time to celebrate with a needle in the arm.

Pst... over here. No, not there. Stop staring at Bessy the sheep. She has stage fright. You see that bush? That's right; it's me, Agent X. What do you mean you can't see me? Just git gud. What? You don't know what that means? Well, fine, fine. I guess I'll have to teach you everything, my young padawan.

Now, we all want to taste that sweet, sweet freedom (COVID-19 vaccine), right? Listen up, trooper, because have I got the plan to cart you down to your local CVS in the blink of an eye for you. You see those shovels, those poor forgotten souls rusting away propped in the dank dusty corner? It's time to give them some love.

Get your gloves on, 'cause you got some digging to do—by "some," I mean lots...and lots. Tunnel to at least six feet under your

dorm out into the meadows. It'll only take a couple days if you put your head to it; trust me, the days will fly by in the blink of an eye.

Once the tree line is within 400 meters, you must bide your time. Patience is key. Campus security is crawling like ants these days; they're everywhere. And you know what the best way is to distract ants? That's right. No, it ain't food, and no, I don't want to hear your story about your banana bread incident.

Ehem. Anyway, you gotta get those speakers and blast Beep Beep I'm a Sheep (feat. TomSka & Black Gryph0n) all throughout campus at a MINIMUM of 150 decibels (the equivalent of a jet plane taking off on the other side of the dining hall). Shatter those windows! We don't need 'em. Get that fresh air flowing.

Now's your chance. As the campus crashes and burns behind you, it's your perfect opportunity to get your sheep disguise on. You'll blend right in with the meadows, and Bessy might actually start tolerating you. Sprint as fast as your little legs can go, and get to that tree line.

Now, you've made it! All that separates you and your local CVS is a river and miles of poison-ivy-infested woods. But it's simple enough. You see me right now? Exactly. You don't.

Traversing the wilderness is as simple as that: be the wilderness. Act like a bush, think like a bush, BE the bush, and nature will leave you alone.

Once you've braved the wilderness, victory is yours! That sweet antiseptic smell and "calming" Cardi B music greets you as you step through that narrow abomination of a doorway. Voila! And no one ever has to know.



# 2021 Oscar Predictions

By CJ Bukowski '23  
Contributor

[Editor's note: This article was written a week before the Oscars award ceremony on April 25; however, all of CJ's predictions were accurate, with the lone exception of Best Original Screenplay, which was awarded to the film Promising Young Woman.]

The Oscars are finally upon us, even with both COVID-19 complications and a month-long delay. The nominees were announced last January, and the prospective movies reflected how hard the film industry has been hit by the pandemic. The rise in films funded by streaming services was mirrored by the 35 Oscar nominations won by Netflix, while the lack of bigger productions in general saw indie films like Nomadland rise to stardom.

That's enough backstory, so I'll get straight to the list. Here are my predictions for who will win what I see as the "big four" Oscar awards—Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Screenplay (both adapted and original).

Best Picture: Nomadland

Through the thicket of all of the streaming-service-backed movies, I think the independent roots of Nomadland really define the movie as a piece of art. The overall direction of Chloé Zhao coupled with the performance of Frances McDormand creates a down to earth yet emotionally moving atmosphere for the documentary-like story. Overall, this movie separates itself and fosters a unique identity in comparison to its competitors.

Best Director: Chloé Zhao  
As the backbone for Nomadland's success,

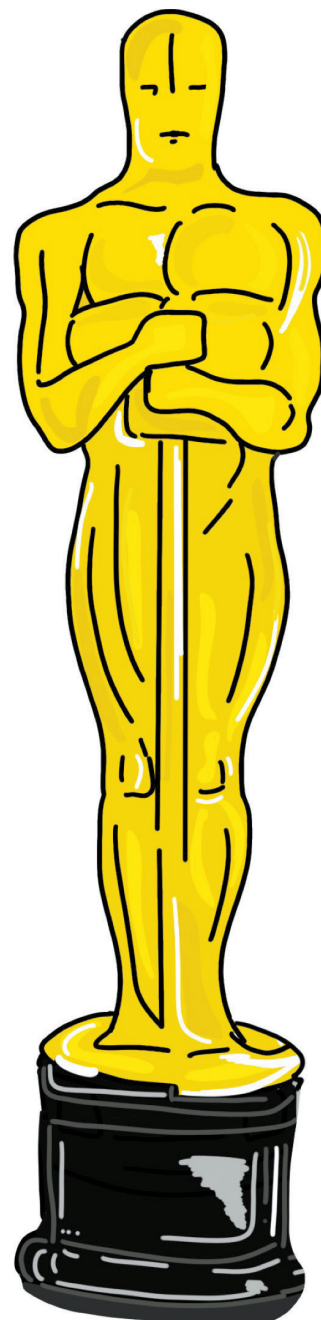
the directional decisions made by Chloé Zhao were truly the heart of the movie. The long, vivid shots that used the natural beauty of Nevada as their tapestry cultivated the homely feel of the story, while the choice to include actual nomads instead of actors grounded the movie in a firm-set realistic tone. I believe it was the rigorous homage to the truth of its story that gives Nomadland its identity, and the thanks for this can be confidently attributed to Chloé Zhao.

Best Adapted Screenplay: The Father

Adapted from a play, The Father, written by Florian Zeller and Christopher Hampton, puts you in the mind of Anthony, an 80-year-old man suffering from dementia. The story does this through clever means like gradually attributing deeper significance to everyday objects, such as a watch, in Anthony's world. Another instrument is the unreliability of the plot itself, as characters constantly change identities and the truth never seems so set in stone. All the while, we truly feel the struggle of communication through the arc of Anthony's daughter, Anne, shining light on another dimension of Anthony's condition.

Best Original Screenplay: Trial of the Chicago 7

The contemporaneity of the subject along with the roller coaster plot of Trial of the Chicago 7 make a strong case for winning this award. This retelling of the historic 1968 Democratic National Convention riot traverses through a full range of emotions echoed by the development of its diverse ensemble of eight heroes. The plot starts off as light-hearted and comedic, but adds depth through tensions of injustice and brutal backstory. The dialogue is witty, the message is impactful, and this screenplay is definitely worthy of an award.



Graphic by Sofia Mansilla '23