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THE HUNGER GAMES THE BALLAD OF SONGBIRDS & SNAKES

Read more about Oracle’s take on the latest rendition of the Hunger Games saga, a soulful look into The Hunger Game’s origin.

Compiled by Kaitlyn Zhang, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Bianca Naranjo and Celeste Hollingsworth, STAFF WRITERS,
graphics courtesy of LionsGate

The eyes of 24 contestants flash with the desperation of survival inside the annual Hunger Games. The resurgence of the Hunger Games series is the cinematic success audiences have been anticipating for nearly a decade. Adapted from the novel written by Suzanne Collins, “Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes” is set 64 years before the beloved trilogy. In the games, contestants are forced to fight to the death for the entertainment of viewers, a way for the government to demonstrate their absolute control. The prequel illuminates the intricate origins of Coriolanus Snow (Tom Blyth), a student who incidentally renews the Hunger Games with a new sense of strength. In order to support his family financially, he mentors Lucy Gray, a contestant from District 12. The deep reds of rebellion mix with the pastels of romance, making for the perfect action-packed adventure.

While many fans of the novel have been delighted by the film’s portrayal of the book’s adventurous storyline, this has not stopped critics from expressing their distaste for the confusing characterization of Snow. In the novel, his betrayal is much more developed, with the plot taking a reasonable amount of time to elaborate on his conflict with the Capitol and the bitterness it endowed him with. The movie’s rushed summary of Snow’s downfall can be misleading; his lack of humanity is clearly indicated by his violence against innocent people, but this development comes about suddenly. Despite Snow’s own character development lacking depth, the movie still manages to encapsulate an impressive amount of depth for a comparably brief runtime, making it a pleasing representation of the novel for many audiences.

In the midst of explosions and brawls inside the arena, music is a key instrument in highlighting the most inspiring moments in the film. Lucy Gray’s soulful voice accompanies the strum of her guitar as she plays with the Covey Band. Within the dirt stained walls illuminated by burnt orange light, the fiddle resonates with other folk instruments in an unexpected fashion. Despite losing momentum in the latest decades, folk music is revitalized through the compelling tunes of “Hunger Games: Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes.” This key feature of the film conveys how music has the power to ignite an unfaltering sense of unity through showing the emotional responses to Lucy’s singing in the citizens of Panem. By leaping into the musical realm, the film blows through all expectations.

While paying homage to the original movies with a dark and captivating essence, the visuals achieve a new nostalgic feel with incomparable visuals. The dim hues of the arena are not only contrasted by the colors of Lucy

Gray’s peculiar wardrobe and Corio’s bright hair, but by nature’s stunning scenery. Filmed in Poland, the adaptation emphasizes the naturalistic scenes to symbolize a safe haven for Corio and Lucy, separate from the violence of the city. Along with the location choices, flawless CGI adds to the amazing visuals. From the white brilliance of the moon seeping into the damaged areas of the arena, the audience does not suspect the use of CGI. Through special attention to the intricacies of the set, a new version of Panem comes to life.

The imaginative, artistic elements of “The Hunger Games: Ballad of the Songbirds and Snakes” are perfect for both film fanatics of the franchise and book readers seeking a nuanced rendition of the novel. Despite some gaps in explaining character development, the plot encapsulates a refreshing amount of depth and refinement, flourishing throughout the movie with the help of gorgeous sets and alluring melodies. A blockbuster that has stunned alongside the previous Hunger Games films, this movie is one of Panem’s best tales.



Warrior Vocal Program’s Winter Concert brings festive cheer with new changes

The unprecedented size of Concert Choir necessitated changes to their annual Winter Concert.

By Paulina Lee
STAFF WRITER

For the first time, the Warrior Vocal Program held two showtimes for its annual Winter Concert Dec. 8. To accommodate the larger audience, Concert Choir, Ladies First and Vocal Ensemble extended their performance to two different showtimes at 5:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Due to the unprecedented size of Concert Choir, members transitioned from their original attire of tuxedos and dresses to uniform black choir robes. According to Vocal Program Director Mark Henson, the new apparel provides a more cohesive presentation and facilitates efficient changes for shows. “If we do something later, like in Spring when we do our Broadway type shows, they could have an outfit underneath their robes,” Henson said. “When it is time to [perform] it is more convenient.” Following the Fall Festival, choirs immediately started practicing for the Winter Concert. Prior to the show, the choirs

rehearsed twice after school to practice their collective numbers for an organized run-through. In preparation for the concert, every choir member helped out in various ways, according to Warrior Vocal Ensemble President Kaushik Kasturi. “During class periods, some members might be helping with decorating the stage and setting up the risers,” Kasturi said. “We also have many students in the theater department who helped us with the sound system, ushering and lights.” Instead of relocating to an

alternative venue such as a school, church or performance hall, Warriors decided to perform twice in the Troy theater for audience convenience, Kasturi said. “[Choir members] thought it would be best to shift from one to two shows in order to accommodate the exponential increase in ticket sales of friends, family and fans coming to watch,” Kasturi said. “Due to the size of our current theater hall, we thought we should split the concert to make the audience feel less cramped.” As part of a new collective performance, choir members



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF WARRIOR VOCAL MUSIC PROGRAM



PHOTO BY LAUREN SONG

SEASON’S GREETINGS: Warrior choir members from all three choirs sang the last carol together as a tribute to senior choristers.

sang in a segment titled “Not-So-Well-Known Carols” which included music dating back to the 1900s. Following each choir’s respective carol set, the night ended with combined group numbers as a tribute to the seniors’ final Winter Concert. According to Henson, Warriors deliberately selected each song from various years to create a diverse and relatable selection of carols for all listeners. “Holiday music is the best music,” Henson said. “Audience members will obviously come to enjoy the people that they come to see, but we hope that they will be able to connect with the music [members] sing for them and the time of year as well.”

Warrior Club STEAM for All hosts STEAM night for elementary school students

Young students worked on two engineering projects during STEAM night as an introduction to STEAM principles.

By Samantha Luo
STAFF WRITER

Creating new experiences for younger students, Warrior club STEAM for All hosted a STEAM night at Santiago TK-8 Elementary School Dec. 1. Founded in 2021 by Co-President Cloris Shi, the STEAM for All club aims to introduce activities centered around science, technology, engineering, art and math to elementary and middle school students. As a chapter in the larger non-profit STEAM for All organization, the Warrior club joins a team of 15 other schools to serve the community through student-run events. According to Co-President Calista Wong, STEAM for All provides students with the opportunity to integrate their various interests. These skills are often used together in the workforce and outside of Troy, Wong said. “You normally do not get to do that in your classes,” Wong said. “In STEAM for All, you can combine all of your science, technology, math, engineering and art [skills] together.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF STEAM FOR ALL

SPECTACULAR STEAM NIGHT: Warrior STEAM for All members introduced younger students to STEAM principles and held a tower building competition.

Warrior STEAM for All merged with fellow Warrior club Create Code Construct in 2023. This STEAM night was their first event hosted jointly. A total of 80 participants, including students in grades three to five and family members, attended the event. Students and parents participated in two hands-on engineering events, building barges and straw towers. During the barge-building event, students constructed tin-foil boats and tested out the durability of the boats by adding weights such as pennies. The straw tower activity challenged students to build the highest towers using only

straws, tape, scissors and rulers. Club members later held a competition to see which engineering designs were the most successful. Students and parents had a lot of fun competing against each other, Shi said. “The students were really engaged during the whole event, improving their structures and cheering each other while testing them,” Shi said. “Many students who were there had also shown up last year, which shows how much fun they had.” Club members plan STEAM nights over the span of five to six weeks. After reaching out to Santiago TK-8 School, members

organized advertising campaigns, gathered materials and arranged transportation and meals for volunteers. The budget comes partially from a special budget Troy has dedicated to STEAM learning and members fundraise the rest. In order to improve participants’ experience, volunteers learned to have an adjustable schedule when it comes to the activities, Shi said. “In the beginning, we were a little aggressive with the number of things we wanted to do, but we learned that it is more important to give kids the time to reflect,” Shi said. “For example, kids actually want to go back and build another [structure] which might leave less time for other activities we planned.” For the next STEAM night, members will secure a larger venue and gather more materials. Events like these provide the opportunity for volunteers and participants to come together and explore important concepts and questions while having fun, Shi said. “The audience had a wonderful time and came out learning more about engineering [and] architecture principles,” Shi said. “It is super rewarding to see volunteers having fun helping kids, spending time with each other, and betting on which structure would be the best.”

Two Warrior drives in December

Feminine products drive



Girl Up collected menstrual and hygienic items to donate to the Alexandria House, a nonprofit women’s shelter in Los Angeles.

By Jenny Huang
STAFF WRITER

In an effort to improve the accessibility of hygienic and menstrual necessities, Warrior club Girl Up hosted their annual feminine products drive on campus Nov. 10 to 17. Founded in 2010, Girl Up is a global initiative that aims to empower girls and inspire them to become leaders. The Troy branch of the movement aspires to educate students about misogyny as well as foster gender equality on campus. During club meetings, members learn about topics such as gender violence, domestic abuse and the pink tax. Prior to the drive, members discussed the high expenses and inaccessibility of feminine products. According to President Ariana Perez, the drive provided health products to those unable to afford them. “[Feminine products] are a necessity for many women, and it is upsetting that they cannot be given for free,” Perez said. “Even at our school, people try to use the [menstrual products] machines and they are typically empty.” During the drive, club members set up a donation box in Room 319 and advertised the drive through Omnia and social media. In addition to menstrual products, the club also

collected hygiene items such as shampoo and hand sanitizer. Along with Girl Up chapters at other high schools, the club donated the items they collected to Alexandria House, a nonprofit women’s shelter that provides housing for women and children. In total, the club received over a thousand items in donations. Everything that was donated makes a difference, Perez said. “Although we are able to afford [care products], and it is not something that we have to constantly worry about, unfortunately it is a sad reality for others,” Perez said. “I hope everyone learns about the impact they have. Even if you just donated a bar of soap or some small lotion bottles, that goes a long way for women who are not used to having many things.” While visiting Alexandria House to volunteer, Warrior Girl Up members talked to the founder as well as current and former residents. Residents shared eye-opening and impactful stories about their experience with shelters, Perez said. “When people think of homeless shelters, they think of a place to [permanently] stay, but typically these places have a two or three-month span, then you have to leave,” Perez said. “[Shelters] are typically very hard to get into, they are very competitive [because] they do not have a lot of room.” In the future, Girl Up aims to continue supporting women by hosting events similar to the drive. Working to make a difference is an impactful experience for everyone involved, Perez said. “We always do [the drive] during Thanksgiving because it is a time to reflect [on] what we are thankful for and what others do not have, and how we can help,” Perez said. “Whether it is a profession [or not], I hope to continue volunteering [my] time to help and support women. I think it is a strong and powerful message for everyone.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARIANA PEREZ

DONATION DELIVERY: Girl Up club members visited the Alexandria House to deliver the collected items and converse with residents.

Winter wear drive

LEO Club aspires to aid struggling local communities through hosting its annual winter clothing collection drive.

By Salman Waheed
STAFF WRITER



With an aim to provide local Fullerton communities with suitable winter clothes, the Warrior Leadership Experience and Opportunity Club hosted a winter wear drive Nov. 13 to Dec. 8. As a chapter of the service organization Lions Clubs International, Warrior LEO aims to strengthen nearby communities in need as well as create a safe environment. Throughout the school year, members of the club are provided with opportunities to help out the Fullerton community through events including clothing or food drives and book fundraisers. With the oncoming winter season, the club organized a school-wide collection of lightly worn or new coats and jackets. The club placed two donation boxes in the front office and one box in Room 334. The drive was publicized through campus posters and online announcements. For the 2023 winter wear drive, LEO clubs around the world set a goal to help over 750 million individuals receive warm clothing. The Warrior chapter delivered donations to a local church to be distributed to the nearby communities. According to Club President Tej Patel, the club needed to devote most of their time to advertising in order to garner more student contribution. The need for campaigning did not arise due to students not wanting to donate to the drive, but rather because many did not know where to go to start helping out, Patel said. “I would say we did not face too many challenges, but our biggest challenge in the beginning of this drive

was getting people to donate to the cause,” Patel said. “Since not too many people were aware of the [winter wear] drive, advertising was a crucial part of making the event succeed this year.” High schoolers at Troy should not just be looking to benefit themselves, but to serve and connect with the disadvantaged folk around them who suffer and struggle from day to day, Patel said. “It is quite common for us to concern ourselves with our own issues and overlook the help that others may need in their daily lives,” Patel said. “Students must take it upon themselves to understand and truly empathize with the struggle that others face in their daily lives by donating to school drives.” To account for future population growth in Fullerton and nearby cities, the club plans to increase their set donation goals every year. The drive also collected additional winter wear items including beanies, scarves and blankets. Anything students can donate is valuable and helps others live feeling welcomed by society or safe, Patel said. “All donations play a huge part in helping less fortunate individuals to feel accepted or even more confident during this season of gift-giving and exchanging,” Patel said. “Therefore, as a school, we have to do our job in order to uplift and empower our community by giving help to any person who needs it.”




CARTOON BY ALICIA YOON

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Warrior Girls Soccer prepares to continue their streak of defeating their competitors this season

Take a look into how girls soccer plans to dominate this season, with hopes to attain D1 once again.

By Kusuma Kothamasu
STAFF WRITER

As the soccer season kicks off, the varsity girls soccer team looks to win the Freeway League for the third year in a row, grow an unbreakable bond, and qualify for CIF. Following a demanding season last year after being moved down to D2, the team continues to work hard to move back up to D1 by the end of the season. In lieu of rigorous practices, girls soccer had a try-out period over the summer, where they

scrimmaged with other teams and were assessed by the coaches for their team placements. “We have so many different players with different skills, and I’ve seen us when we work together, and once we work together, we have this momentum and it can’t be stopped,” said Soph-Frosh Captain Eshani Deshpande. With a strenuous season ahead of them, the Warriors typically work on their plyometric drills, set plays, juggling skills and technical drills on light practice days. Heavy practice days, however, are the opposite, with the team working on technical drills, possession drills, shooting, crossing, finishing and scrimmaging with each other for as long as two hours.

Despite the Warriors’ rigorous practices, they expect the drills to gradually become more strenuous as the season progresses. “With the many new players that have joined our family, I can definitely see a new bond and connection with them,” Varsity Captain Zoe Mendiola said. “I believe this will continue to progress as the season goes on and that the time will come when their confidence and trust in themselves will flourish.” Nevertheless, Mendiola remarked, the team should continue to build their communication and confidence in order to be sharp with decision making on the field, play simple and keep the ball. “The players have had a lot

more responsibility this year than last year by being able to lead the team and having set captains,” Deshpande said. With almost all the Warriors in the team playing club soccer in addition to high school soccer, the team proceeds to develop their skills year-round. Due to the team’s skills originating from individual development, the Warriors were challenged to pass a skills test in order to receive their uniforms. Being a major motivator to work through adversity, the skills test consisted of different skills on the wall to challenge the Warriors’ strength. “The test definitely tested my patience, but in the end it was worth it,” Mendiola said. Winning Freeway League this year, would put the team in a good spot despite D1 competition being very intense. Although the D1 title is intimidating, the Warriors believe that putting the same effort into their games will help them succeed and move onto CIF. “I know I said we had to work on our chemistry more, but I think that’s something that, no matter how much chemistry you have, you could always have more,” Deshpande said. “This time, it’s a lot more—this year, we’re enjoying ourselves more than last year.”



MEANINGFUL MEETINGS: Varsity Soccer Coach Mike Silzer calls for a team meeting for the varsity girls soccer team right before the end of practice on Dec. 7

Warrior Girls Soccer team’s Instagram reaches a new milestone surpassing 200,000 followers

Look into how the girls soccer team’s Instagram was created and how it continues to benefit the incredible girls on the team.

By Finley Dalley
PUBLICITY

As of December 2023, the Warrior girls soccer Instagram account has reached over 200,000 followers, making it Troy High School’s most followed social media account to date. In 2019, Soccer Coach Mike Silzer was transferred from coaching the boys team to coaching the girls. Feeling as though there was not enough media promoting the remarkable female game, he decided to set up an Instagram account, which since then has grown exponentially. Originally, the Instagram account’s pictures and videos were shot by Max Lavigne, who was the team’s videographer for multiple years until he graduated. After leaving, his spot was replaced by professional photographers who capture the girls in action during the games and Coach Silzer, who captures the training videos on his iPhone. The account’s purpose has remained consistent throughout the past five years to get the girls’ names to big schools, alongside their

other information that would be helpful in the recruitment process. “Most of them aspire to play at the collegiate level, [so] there’s a lot of competition,” Silzer said. “There’s nobody else who’s giving their high school kids the same amount of exposure as we are. Even the clubs can’t touch the reach we have given them.” The social media presence

also leads to gifting from brands to the girls of training kits, tools for practicing and other resources inaccessible without the help of brands such as Hyperice’s donation of Normatec recovery boots. These resources help to heighten their performance, which allows the team to only get stronger. An added opportunity presented

by the success of the account is the exposure to younger girls who love to play soccer. New recruits from all over Orange County are exposed to the incredible team. This exposure allows the soccer program to continue to flourish with incredible players consistently coming to tryouts, after having seen the remarkable social media presence.







PHOTOS BY LAUREN SONG

2023 Semester Report Card

The first semester has flown, making way for the New Year. Read what Oracle’s opinion team has to say about the school year so far!

Compiled by Edyn Mai, **OPINION EDITOR**, written by Kate Berger, Chelsea Engelhardt, Shailey Patel and Victoria Yang, **STAFF WRITERS**

School Spirit		Administration		Calendar		Facilities									
Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage								
	85%		90%		62%		76%								
<p>More effort needs to be put into school spirit across the board. A spirited environment is the high of an American high school experience. School spirit has been proven to have a major role in school settings by inspiring positivity and excitement for all students. While Troy has had a great deal of school spirit this year, we can improve the amount of student involvement by promoting activities through universally accessible platforms and allowing school spirit events to reach their full potential.</p> <p>All school spirit events are primarily promoted through Instagram, which not all students have. While it is understandable that ASB chooses to promote school spirit on Instagram, they should also post the same information on an additional platform. Although a considerable amount of information is mentioned on Troy Omnia, it is easy to forget it by the end of the day. In order to keep Troy students informed about school events, ASB could post on an app that all students can access at home, like Google Classroom or Remind. Inclusive advertisement will increase school spirit and inform all students about important school spirit events.</p> <p>While ASB constantly thinks of fun activities to promote school spirit, admin and the student body make reaching their full</p>		<p>potential a challenging feat. In an interview with Marianne Li, the senior executive treasurer of Troy ASB, Li discusses the process of planning and approving spirit events. “When some of our ideas are unapproved, we brainstorm more for events and run them by admin,” Li said. For events that follow district guidelines, admin should be more lenient while approving ASB’s ideas for events. Additionally, in order for school spirit events to flourish, more students need to be involved. Although there are not many school events each year, many students choose to skip them. Fortunately, school participation has been increasing this year. “I have seen a huge increase in student participation in attending sports games,” Li said. The student body should make more of an effort to attend school events in order to maximize the amount of school spirit Troy exhibits.</p> <p>Despite the immense amount of school spirit Troy has already displayed this year, it can be improved by the student body and admin, bringing school spirit to a new level. In addition, ASB needs to improve the way they spread information, as Instagram is not inclusive to all students at Troy. While school spirit at Troy could be improved, Troy ASB is an exceptional student body that promotes school spirit effectively.</p>		<p>Admin’s changes this school year have had great success among the student body. Troy’s admin and faculty are the backbone of the school. Working every day to provide the student body the best opportunities possible, Troy admin has spared no expense in bettering the lives of students. Managing a variety of tasks from teaching our students to keeping our school running, admin has done a great job this year.</p> <p>This year, the district made the decision to extend the drop deadline for classes to the release of the first progress report. This allowed students extra time to decide whether to keep or drop their classes, letting them to understand the expectations of the class before making a decision. While this extension meant more work on the counselor’s and admin’s end, it provided students with better opportunities to succeed. This year, admin made a huge effort to make sure that scheduling was made as easy and efficient as possible, despite any changes that made the process more difficult than it had been in previous years.</p> <p>Additionally, admin has also made improvements to the Troy campus, adding signs with room numbers to each building and labeling the doors of different classes. This change has made it easier for students to find classes that may be in a location</p>		<p>that they are not familiar with. Admin has also worked to make Troy a more secure environment, putting a greater emphasis on student wellness. This year, Troy was given a grant with the Orange County Department of Education to be able to provide a wellness center to cater to student needs. Hearing the needs of the student body, admin has also made the wellness room more accessible by adding additional days and times for students. Troy admin understands the need to bolster student health, and the Wellness Room was a great resource to provide to students. This has let students to take a break from the stress they may be feeling and take time to focus on themselves.</p> <p>Even though many improvements have been made this year, there are changes that the school body would like to see in the future. Many students have expressed a desire for the renovation of the school website to make it more accessible and less cluttered. Although admin at Troy does not have much control over the formatting as much as it does the information, the page is hard for a lot of people to navigate. Despite this, the admin has done a great job at keeping the information on the website updated consistently and being able to relay information to students in a timely manner.</p> <p>All in all, Troy admin has made changes that have been a big win for the student body.</p>		<p>Admin and teachers need to properly and strategically plan out calendar dates. Troy is a school of many strengths, but an effective and convenient calendar is not one of them. The current calendar at Troy results in teachers often scheduling tests on the same days giving students a build-up of stress on the days prior. The flawed calendar throughout the school increases this stress with poor planning on late-start days. The scheduling aspect of Troy needs to improve and consider the perspectives of students and staff.</p> <p>Teachers and on-campus staff need to be more aware of how their planned calendars affect student workload. There seems to be a lack of teacher-to-teacher communication with schedule overlapping because tests are often piled on top of each other. With added tests, student workloads can turn into hours of studying and time management. Poor communication should not be one of the factors inhibiting students’ sleep. With all of the meetings teachers have from late starts and staff development days, some of these meetings could be used to collaborate on a successful exam schedule. To prevent having multiple tests back to back on a single school day, teachers must communicate with each other to diversify testing days.</p> <p>Teachers should more efficiently work around dates that are previously scheduled. Although it may</p>		<p>take more time to plan labs or essays on shorter days for rallies or professional development, the district calendar is released ahead of time to allow these accommodations to be made. Teachers should work around the previously existing schedule to increase classroom efficiency. Working around the district schedule would also be extremely beneficial for teachers and students alike. It is well known that teenagers’ attention spans are much shorter due to an overload of internet consumption, but added stress from workloads only makes matters worse. A study done on the attention spans of students at Santa Maria College has shown that an excessive amount of information can inhibit the ability to learn and focus more. This means that having an overload of information from several different tests in a day makes learning a more difficult process. If teachers were able to effectively schedule tests and labs, students would be able to pay more attention in class since they would not have piled workloads. This would in turn enhance the effectiveness of learning and would make it easier for teachers to do their job.</p> <p>Troy’s calendar should prioritize convenience for the staff and students. Instead of blindly picking dates convenient for them, teachers should be considerate and strategic with their planning. Overall, the calendar within Troy itself can be improved so that everyone is happy.</p>		<p>The campus at Troy is a constant work-in-progress towards better maintenance and improvement. The campus is the face of the school: visitors first see it, students are here for hours, and teachers spend decades of their lives here. Not only are the facilities at Troy used to ensure effective instruction, they are also crucial to create a pleasant and beautiful environment. While the facilities at Troy do have room for improvement, they are an overall constant work-in-progress for the better.</p> <p>To keep the campus running smoothly, Troy’s facilities are constantly updated. For example, a lot of classrooms reported sightings of rats, cockroaches and ants. Drilling from construction in Troy and California State University, Fullerton across the street often disturb rats and cause them to flee for a new home. After insect control measures, the problem is now dying down. “So the 900s, I think we... haven’t heard any reports on [rats] in the past like three months,” Assistant Principal of Instruction Operations Lance Bletcher said. Additionally, the chairs in the 500 building hallways have been recently upholstered. After around seven to eight years of continuous use, they were very tattered. Costing about a third</p>		<p>of its original price, the upholstery refreshed their looks and useability. Troy’s campus has been properly maintained with fixes and replacements constantly being put in place. However, there are long-term problems that have not been solved. After thousands of students walking on the carpets over decades, classroom carpets are extremely worn out. “I would say most of this carpet, which is the same stuff that are in the rooms, have to be...pushing twenty plus years,” Bletcher said. Additionally, the carpets are only thoroughly cleaned once a year in the summer. Throughout the year, there are countless drinks spilled and food crumbs dropped, leaving stains and blemishes. Often, students sit on these carpets for work and group projects. Rather than only once a year, carpets can also be cleaned during breaks. Although there are understandable budget and logistics limitations, these are genuine student concerns that affect their experiences on campus.</p> <p>Ultimately, the facilities at Troy are ever-changing and ever-evolving. Bletcher encourages student input on improvement ideas. “At least for me personally I’m always looking for ways to make the campus more usable, use every space and every inch we have.”</p>	

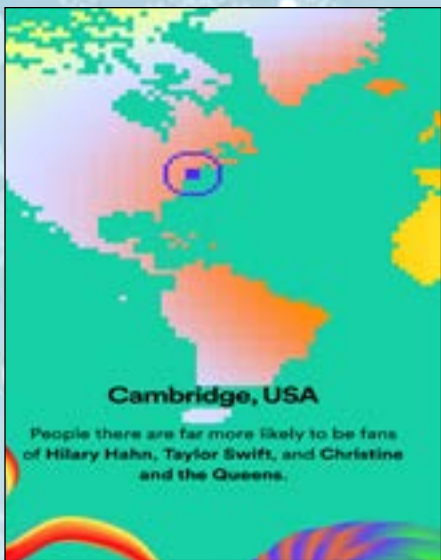
Total GPA (Unweighted):3.40

Total GPA (Weighted):3.65

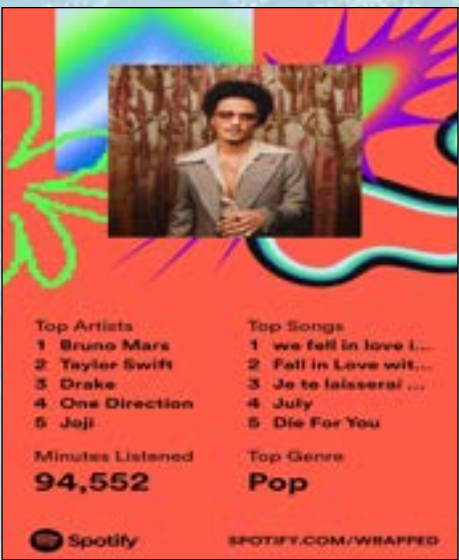
School Rank:204 of 17,680

National Ranking
Courtesy of U.S. News & World Report

ORACLE MARK MY WORDS CHRISTMAS EDITION



JENNIFER LI, SENIOR



GARY LE, JUNIOR



TROY FRANCISCONI,
SENIOR



ISAAC AN, SENIOR



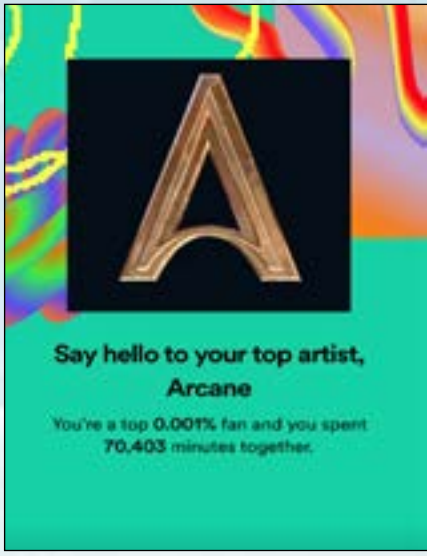
ADAM RIVADA,
JUNIOR



ETHAN LOMIBAO,
SENIOR



ETHAN NOH, SENIOR



THEO SOHN, SENIOR

Christmas music can be played any time of year. For me personally, I start on November 1st... Thanksgiving supporters will hate on me but I view Thanksgiving as a nice little day of food, that's it. I don't need a whole day dedicated to being thankful when I show that I am thankful through various different methods on a daily basis.

ANDREW HONG, SENIOR

"All I Want for Christmas is You" is my favorite Christmas Song because it's such a memorable classic.

BRADLEY VO, JUNIOR

ABSOLUTELY NOT HELLO? People pray for the well being of people who work in retail but I absolutely envy it. Ummm like are u serious I would listen to Mariah Carry any day of th week 25/8. christmas just makes me a feel a little fuzzy inside like theres a little elf burning coal inside of me. im not even christian im a mormon

REAGAN MOUA, SENIOR

Christmas Is Here by Danny Gokey is easily my favorite Christmas Song because it alludes to Christmas experiences all around the nation, even in California, where the weather is 80 degrees and we stick our trees in sand!

JACOB PAN, JUNIOR

My favorite classic Christmas song is Silver Bells because it's so beautiful and I love the imagery and melody. My favorite pop Christmas song is All I Want For Christmas Is You by Mariah Carey because I'm basic and it's so fun to listen to, especially with my friends.

ELEANOR YUAN SENIOR

X-mas brings jolly cheer, happiness, and love to everyone's lives and anyone who says it's cringe really needs to realize that they're being cringe

DAGHAN BALLI, SOPHOMORE

Christmas season begins on December 1st. If I'm being generous, any time after Thanksgiving. There are too many major holidays leading up to December, so I don't think it's fair for the Christmas holiday to usurp the time meant to be spent on other things like Thanksgiving or Halloween.

LESHANSHUI YUAN, SENIOR

From Headlines to Hashtags

Always true to herself, Oracle alumna Jade Bahng has found her calling as a lifestyle content creator. Keep reading to uncover the commitment and growth needed behind each aesthetic post.

Compiled by Eileen Um, **FEATURE EDITOR**, article by Helen Fang, **STAFF WRITER**, photos courtesy of Jade Bahng

Carefully arranged lotions and tote bags stand poised among a ruffled blanket backdrop before being replaced by selfie mode, with content creator Jade Bahng taking center stage. Through each video frame, Bahng’s unique aesthetic and relatable persona shine through her wealth of college advice and picture-perfect digital diaries. With 2.7 million likes and over 24,000 followers, Bahng’s social media hobby has flourished into a professional career as a lifestyle influencer on Tik-Tok under the name, “justbjade.” Bahng’s success in the world of social media is built upon the experiences and wisdom she gleaned from pursuing her passions since high school.

Panning back to her days at Troy High School, Bahng attributes her effective storytelling to three years spent in Oracle as a Lifestyle page writer, editor and eventual managing editor. During her time as a Lifestyle writer, Bahng incorporated her interests in the newest fashion styles into her articles, drawing from Teen Vogue, Mary Claire and GQ. The research tactics Bahng used in the Oracle articles pushed her to stay on top of trends while the hours spent drafting articles translated into polished professionalism. Having established a solid writing foundation in Oracle, Bahng ventured into social media with the Daily Daisy Project in her sophomore year. Determined to help the healthcare workers at the frontlines of the pandemic, Bahng used the project as a platform to donate 100 percent of her jewelry proceeds to COVID relief organizations like

Get Us PPE. Bahng sent her jewelry to other lifestyle creators while advocating for social issues one post at a time. Bahng applied her publicity and collaboration experience towards her club, Creatives for Social Change, hosting fundraisers and publicity campaigns. From the Daily Daisy Project to Creatives for Social Change, Bahng realized a world of unlimited possibilities lay at her fingertips.

“I always knew she was destined for something amazing,” French teacher and CSC adviser Mr. Fritz said. “She saw media and technology as a tool, and the creativity came from her heart and intellect.”

After graduating from Troy High School in 2022, Bahng began writing a new chapter of her life at the University of Southern California. Wanting to provide incoming college freshmen with advice, Bahng began her Get Ready With Me series on Tiktok. Discussing anything from dormitory essentials to club interview processes at USC, Bahng has established an extensive audience for her college lifestyle niche. As a supplement to her major in Communication and Consumer Behavior, Bahng expanded upon her creation of college blogs and short-form videos to engage in brand deals and sponsorships, promoting products by companies like Notion,

Coach and Amazon. Each short video clip encapsulates campaign work, brand deal negotiations and scheduling in order to upload two to three posts a week. Bahng believes content creation is a constant battle to stay on top of fluctuating social media trends and aesthetics. However, by staying true to her desire to have fun, Bahng has a positive outlook for the future.

“You have to be open to experimenting with new looks and aesthetics while staying true to my personal brand,” Bahng said. “I’m hoping that I can keep experimenting and exploring forever.”

Throughout Bahng’s creative journey, her parents supported her new passion projects and interests. Knowing firsthand the competitive and mostly STEM-oriented nature of Troy, Bahng’s decision to make a career out of social media received disapproval from others. However, Bahng learned to unapologetically trailblaze her form of creative storytelling. Bahng maintains an optimistic mindset, viewing criticism as an indication of her ability to connect with diverse audiences. Reflecting on the growth achieved in her high school years, Bahng encourages others to be authentic towards themselves, rather than simply sticking to a college-bound narrative.

“Don’t only focus on grades,” Bahng said. “Focus on developing hobbies, having stories that you can tell other people and discovering where you want to go. That, I think, is much more valuable as a student.”



THE BOY AND THE HERON

Hayao Miyazaki returns from retirement with Studio Ghibli's latest film. Read more as Oracle covers how his farewell message runs much deeper than just a boy and a pesky heron.

Compiled by Kaitlyn Zhang, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Kaitlyn Zhang, graphics courtesy of Studio Ghibli

A dose of eerie childhood fairytales, knife-wielding parakeets and parallel dimensions are all key ingredients to Studio Ghibli's "The Boy and The Heron." A solemn goodbye from Studio Ghibli's beloved filmmaker Hayao Miyazaki, this is his most complex film yet. Both a heartwarming childhood fantasy as well as a contemplation of Miyazaki's legacy, "The Boy and The Heron" is the perfect formula of passing the baton to not just his grandson but to the next generation of creatives.

Set amidst the unstable landscape of the World War II era, the film begins in a murky ocean of passersbys as Mahito Maki, our silent hero, runs to the

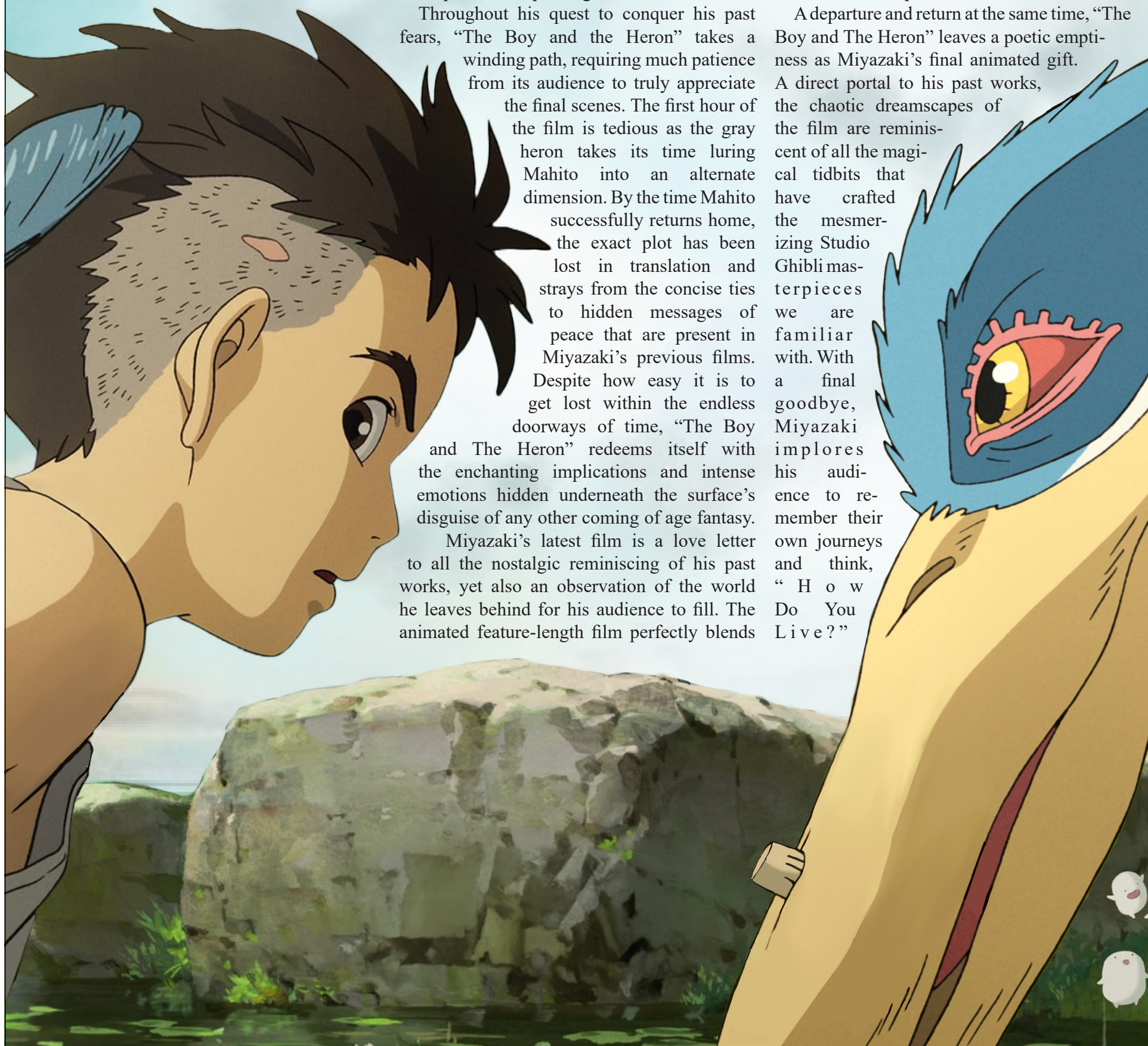
hospital where his mother has been engulfed in flames. After Mahito has been sent to the countryside to live with his new stepmother, Natsuko, the trauma of his mother's death haunts him at every moment of sleep's embrace. With a bustling new environment of gossiping grannies and endless free time, Mahito is taunted by a sinister gray heron which provokes him at every turn, requesting his presence at the mysterious tower in the lush forest by his new home. The disappearance of his stepmother forces Mahito further down the tower's rabbit hole, into seamless parallel dimensions filled with floating human souls called the warawara and parakeets plotting a human dinner.

Throughout his quest to conquer his past fears, "The Boy and the Heron" takes a winding path, requiring much patience from its audience to truly appreciate the final scenes. The first hour of the film is tedious as the gray heron takes its time luring Mahito into an alternate dimension. By the time Mahito successfully returns home, the exact plot has been lost in translation and strays from the concise ties to hidden messages of peace that are present in Miyazaki's previous films. Despite how easy it is to get lost within the endless doorways of time, "The Boy and The Heron" redeems itself with the enchanting implications and intense emotions hidden underneath the surface's disguise of any other coming of age fantasy.

Miyazaki's latest film is a love letter to all the nostalgic reminiscing of his past works, yet also an observation of the world he leaves behind for his audience to fill. The animated feature-length film perfectly blends

dreamscapes with reality, blurring the lines between Mahito's greatest dreams and fears. "The Boy and The Heron" takes inspiration from both Miyazaki's childhood memories of war and the Japanese novel "How Do You Live?," the Japanese translation of the film's English name. The novel's cameo in the film is the perfect indicator of Miyazaki's last message to Studio Ghibli fans across the world. Despite our urge to fall into our most nostalgic reveries, it is impossible to ignore our realities. However, Miyazaki's swan song tells us we hold the power to transform fantasies into our reality through his elegant depiction of Mahito's acceptance of his mother's death.

A departure and return at the same time, "The Boy and The Heron" leaves a poetic emptiness as Miyazaki's final animated gift. A direct portal to his past works, the chaotic dreamscapes of the film are reminiscent of all the magical tidbits that have crafted the mesmerizing Studio Ghibli masterpieces we are familiar with. With a final goodbye, Miyazaki implores his audience to remember their own journeys and think, "How Do You Live?"



WINTER LOOKBOOK

As the greatly anticipated holiday season begins, it is time to swap out your shirts and shorts for some warm winter essentials. Join Oracle in styling creatively cozy outfits according to your personal aesthetics.

Compiled by Zoey Bahng, LIFESTYLE EDITOR, article by Bianca Naranjo, STAFF WRITER, photos courtesy of Pinterest

COMFY & COZY

The much-needed relaxation of winter break brings along the necessity of an especially comfy outfit! Perfect for watching a movie or cuddling close to a fire, cozy winter basics are an effortlessly fashionable way to stay comfortably merry this season. To build on this simple look, you can slip on a fleece-lined hoodie to nestle into that snug blanket feeling. Off-the-shoulder tops from retailers like Brandy Melville or Princess Polly are especially trending this season, bringing a taste of elegance into softer silhouettes. Now for shoes, while a pair of fluffy socks are an undeniably crucial item in winter, a warm boot can give you just as much warmth and seasonal joy. In the last few years, Uggs have made a huge comeback, reviving the classic cozy boot with new trendy renditions. Of the many options, the Ultra Mini boots and Platform Tasman slippers have been the hottest Ugg items, which can easily pair with sweatpants for your everyday errands. Layering warm accessories like giant knit scarves, earmuffs and crochet legwarmers can help you bundle up and melt into the season.



STREET WEAR

From navigating through your winter vacation city, to finding new stores at the mall with friends, streetwear is a promising style for students hoping to approach winter break with a teenager's take on functional fashion. Weather-friendly adventuring can come to life with trending pieces like puffer jackets, which have made a huge comeback on the winter fashion scene. In particular, The North Face's cropped puffers and vest jackets are perfect layering pieces to put on over a hoodie on frigid days. For occasions that are not as cold, leather racer jackets can be equipped as a timeless touch to dress up any look with a sharper angle that takes notes from the edgy side of streetwear. Baggy jeans and cargos also fit right into the streetwear aesthetic, pairing the jackets' looser silhouettes with similarly relaxed structures. As a tasteful touch to the effortless look of streetwear, one can experiment with statement jewelry like chunky gold hoops or silver chains that can personalize and elevate the casual outfit.



Preppy

Does dressing for college make you better prepared for finals? Find out by donning the scholarly styles of a preppy wardrobe. The "tailored yet casual" feel of preppy outfits is distinctly fashionable and generally simple to experiment with—and what better time to venture this aesthetic than winter? One reliable outfit combination is a fitted knit sweater, a pleated skirt, a pair of knee-high boots over fleece-lined tights and ribbons to tie off the ensemble. To personalize your own compiation, polished v-neck sweaters and cable knits can be equipped for a versatile, everyday look, with brands like Ralph Lauren notably carrying these timeless staples. Since these labels can be pricey, thrift stores are a great alternative option, as they have underrated stashes of vintage or unique handmade pieces, making them gems to students looking to save on style. To complete the full academic aesthetic, shoes like oxfords, flats and minimalistic boots have come to the spotlight as excellent representatives for the elegance of preppy styles during winter, keeping styles clean instead of clunky.



TROY-DER JOE'S

Come aboard to learn more about the work-life balances of these ambitious students as they clock into their shifts at the Brea Trader Joe's.

Compiled by Zoey Bahng, LIFESTYLE EDITOR, article by Bianca Naranjo, STAFF WRITER, photos courtesy of Google and by Reagan Li, PHOTO

Trader Joe's is a popular grocery store that offers a uniquely niche selection of groceries, including iconic fan-favorites such as the Everything But the Bagel seasoning or the Rolled Corn Tortilla Chips. But if there is anything that captures the welcoming identity of this store better than its products, it is the friendly staff—also known as crewmates. Representing the Brea Trader Joe's location, seniors Avery Nelson, Gabriel Rogido and Natalia Paoli and junior Finley Dalley prove that a fun balance of work and academic responsibilities is possible.

In fact, these crewmates unite in their love for their jobs, where they can learn new skills, build friendships and enjoy delicious snacks. The foundation of a valuable work experience is eager involvement and a sense of community, both of which have been reliable factors in these warriors' part-time careers. Paoli describes that "every employee always wants to be there and that has created an incredible environment," which further exemplifies the teamwork of the students. Reflecting on her fellow crewmates, Nelson remarks on how "there are so many highschoolers that work at the store, so [she is] rarely ever alone and it makes working more fun."

Especially for high school students, finding hours to juggle a job can be difficult, but these students are able to work around it with their perfected routines. Rogido describes that "during water polo season, [he] would get done and shower on the pool deck...and leave straight to work." For others focusing on academics, time-management is still a crucial skill to hone. Nelson claims that the simple formula for success in managing time is "just a matter of timing out your work and getting into a routine where you know what class you're able to do when you're tired."



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